# WATCHING AN HOUR

## A BOOK FOR THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

BY FRANCIS P. DONNELLY S.J

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## A Book for the Blessed Sacrament

FRANCIS P. DONNELLY, S.J.
AUTHOR OF THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL AND THE HEART OF REVELATION

WITHDRAWN

NEW YORK
P. J. KENEDY & SONS

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248.63
D 685m
1595

TO THE MANY MEMBERS
OF THE
EUCHARISTIC PROPAGANDA
WHO, HEARKENING TO THE WORDS OF JESUS
"COULD YOU NOT WATCH ONE HOUR WITH ME?"
COME TO ADORE AND PRAY BEFORE HIS TABERNACLE
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED
IN THE EARNEST HOPE
THAT THEIR NUMBERS MAY INCREASE
THAT THEIR VISITS MAY MULTIPLY MORE AND MORE
AND THEIR HOURS OF ADORATION MAY GROW EVER IN
FAITH AND FERVOR

**Imprimi potest:**

ANTONIUS MAAS, S.J.,
*Praepositus Prov. Marylandiae Neo-Eboracensis*

**Nihil obstat:**

REMIGIUS LAFORT, S.T.D.,
*Censor*

**Imprimatur:**

✠ JOANNES CARDINALIS FARLEY,
*Archiepiscopus Neo-Eboracensis*

NEO-EBORACI,
*Die 18 Feb., 1914*

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## APPENDIX


I. THE NATURE OF THE HOLY HOUR AND ITS INDULGENCES . . . 235

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## NOTE TO THE READER

THE *following thoughts have been written to supply fresh material for prayer and meditation before the Blessed Sacrament. One of these chapters has appeared before in print, and its wide circulation, due to the kindness of friends, was one motive which induced the writer to put together other like meditations. With the exception of one other chapter recently printed, the book is entirely new.*

*The spread of Communion, the practice of the Holy Hour, the frequency of Exposition and Adoration of our hidden Lord, the long and repeated Visits, which have been so wonderfully stimulated by the Eucharistic Propaganda, and many other religious services connected with the Holy Eucharist, all call*

*for new presentation of the truths in their bearing upon the presence of Christ in the Tabernacle.*

*The thoughts have been divided into points and put under somewhat novel headings in order to facilitate remembrance and to stimulate lax attention. The presence of listeners has been supposed, and it is hoped that the directness of address, arising from this supposition, will make the book suitable for public reading without rendering it less suited to private reflections. The substance of the thoughts is taken from the Gospels, and an endeavor has been made to follow our Lord along more lowly paths and to study His words and deeds in some less hackneyed aspects and with new bearing upon His life on the Altar.*

*At the end of the book will be found an account of the Holy Hour and its indulgences with an order of exercises which can be altered to suit one's devotional tastes. Thoughts, prayers,*

*hymns, everything, in a word, necessary to the proper carrying on of the Holy Hour will be found between the covers of this manual.*

***F. P. D.***

# WATCHING AN HOUR

## SLEEPING, WATCHING AND WAKING

### *SLEEPING*

YOU will not read in our Lord's life much about His sleeping. In fact the hours of sleep are in a sense hardly a part of man's life. You have heard Jesus say, speaking of Himself, "The Son of Man hath not whereon to lay His head." Jesus found it difficult to get a resting place for the night. The rare mention of His sleeping, then, makes famous the sleep of Jesus during a storm on the lake of Galilee. He was tired with the day's work which had been heavier than usual. When He entered the boat of the apostles to cross the lake, He lay down in the stern of the vessel and rested His head on a pillow, which likely enough

was the rough cushions of the seats or perhaps some improvised pillow of coat or sail. Jesus was very tired. The apostles remembered this sleep of His for all their life. Time and time again they looked towards Him as they saw the storm gather and break on their frail boat. Yet Jesus slept. The wind rushed madly down from the encircling hills, whipped the racing waves into flying foam, flinging the lifted surge over the side of the ship and filled the boat with water. This was no ordinary storm. The fishermen who had so often sailed the lake were now frightened. Would the sleep of Jesus never come to an end? Their fears increase until they can contain themselves no longer. They shriek out, "Lord save us, we perish." Jesus awoke. He briefly rebuked the timid apostles: "O ye of little faith," and as briefly restored calm to the lake. "Peace, be still," He said, "and the wind ceased and there was a great calm."

Jesus might reproach His followers with lack of faith but could you so reproach them? The apostles were in the same vessel with Jesus; they looked to Him; they prayed to Him. Their faith was little because despite all the power which Jesus had displayed on many occasions, they were still lacking in the courage of their convictions. Your faith, you must sadly admit, is little also. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, wrapped up within the color, shape, weight, and other appearances of bread, may be said to be asleep as far as moving or speaking is concerned. Jesus is quiet but He is with you and wants you to call to Him if the storm is upon you. Your souls may be disturbed by anger. You may be struggling with despair. You may think that all is lost and that you must yield to the wild fury of some temptation. Every powerful emotion that swells and rages and seems to be about to sweep you from virtue and God, re-

sembles the storm that fell upon the apostles. Jesus was asleep in the hinder part of the ship. The apostles should not have feared. Neither should you. The storm will not overwhelm you. But if the waves run high, if you feel that you never met before in your life so fierce a tempest, then look to Jesus and cry to Jesus, "Lord, save us, we perish."

Yet be not content that Jesus should be in the same Church with you. Bring Him still nearer. Bring Him into the roaring winds and wild waters. Jesus will speak with power from where He lays His head in the sacramental sleep in the tabernacle. Jesus will speak with greater power if you bring Him to you in Communion to lay His head within your hearts. Jesus should not be permitted to utter the sad cry that He has not whereon to lay His head. No, you will welcome Him into your agitated souls, and there He surely will hear

your cries for help. Through the storm the voice of Jesus will ring in tones of rebuke against anger, temptation or despair. You will hear His omnipotent voice command the storms: "Peace, be still." The great storm will be followed by a great calm.

*WATCHING*

Jesus was sleeping in the boat while the apostles watched and worked. This was not the usual way. In most cases it was Jesus who kept the watch. Watching is the duty of those who are awake while others are asleep. The sentry watches while the army sleeps. The shepherds were keeping their watches over their flocks when Bethlehem was asleep on the night Jesus was born. Jesus came upon earth in the watches of the night and very early in His life did Jesus begin to stay awake while others slept. Many a time too after that He passed the night in prayer, keeping watch over His flock.

They must rest; He must watch and talk with His Father about His little flock. On one such occasion the apostles had embarked and were rowing across the lake of Galilee. The winds were against them and their toil was great. They labored long and hard and accomplished little. They were growing discouraged when suddenly Jesus, Who had been watching all the night, came to them walking over the waves about the fourth watch of the night. At once all their troubles ceased. Again, after His Resurrection, the apostles saw Jesus in the early morning and at His word let down their nets and found their labors, which so far had been in vain, suddenly rewarded by an abundant haul of fish. Jesus again had been watching while His followers worked.

These are a few of Jesus' watchings. They show us His love. They prepare us for the long, unceasing watch of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. There

Jesus holds sleepless vigil. There He is the sentinel of mankind, doing sentry duty for all, watching while you sleep, praying while you are silent, ever ready to come forth to you in your trials, to bless your failures with success. Come in the early morning and you will find that Jesus has not slept. He will perform a greater miracle than walking on the waters. He will make His way into your troubled hearts. He will give you a richer reward than nets breaking with great fishes. Your hearts will fill to overflowing with Jesus Himself and all His graces. With the spouse of the Canticles, manifesting greater and more lasting love, Jesus may cry from the stillness of the tabernacle: "I sleep and my heart watcheth." Yes, Jesus is, as St. Paul tells us, "always living to make intercession for us." Come to the watching Heart on the altar: come in trouble and you will find calm; come in failure and you will have success.

You have yet to hear of the most terrible watch which Jesus kept, a watch which began in blood, continued in blood and ended in blood, from the pores oozing blood in Gethsemane to deep wounds gushing blood on Calvary. When you think of the watches on the altar, forget not His great watch and His last watch, the watch of the Passion. Jesus watched then for your worst troubles and for your saddest failures. You were threatened by no earthly storm ending in shipwreck, but over you hung the black clouds of eternal wrath. You were near to everlasting shipwreck when Jesus entered upon His death watch for you. You were condemned criminals. All your labors of soul were in vain until Jesus began and finished the watching which went from the Garden to the Cross. There He saved you from eternal damnation; there He won for you the success of heaven when you were through sin facing the unending failure of hell. [10]

Recall too the price Jesus paid in His watching for you. There was no closing of the eyes on that watch. The sight of sin and torture kept the eyes open in fear and sorrow. The wild mob with clubs, hurrying Him over the dark roads from one place to another left no leisure for repose. Could His head rest when they wove thorns about it? Could His body rest as it leaned against the pillar of the scourging? Could His eyes close in sleep when false witnesses and violent adjurations, when questionings of Pilate and scoffings of Herod, when jeers and insults and cries of repudiation, beat upon His ears and kept His soul in a fever? Ah, but then might He not cease His watch and take His rest when His tormentor finally brought Him to His bed and made Him lie thereon? Soft mattress that, the hard wood of the Cross; yielding pillow that, which was made of pointed thorns, resting upon a beam, and for coverings there was nakedness,

and that Jesus might not slip from the resting place which His friends prepared for Him, they tucked in His hands and feet with hammers and nails. Oh, that was watching for you and me! The watching of divine mercy, the watching of infinite love! Nor has the watching of Jesus yet come to an end. His eyes are still open, because sin will not let Him close them. He looks today for a resting-place. Some offer Him a cross. What do you offer Him?

*WAKING*

To consider Jesus when awake is to take all four gospels for consideration. The subject is too vast. Restrict this question of being awake to those occasions when Jesus taught you the necessity of watchfulness. Watching is staying awake when one might sleep. Consider here the topic of being asleep when one ought to be awake. You are all servants in the Lord's great house-

hold, and to you all Jesus speaks when He says: "Let your loins be girt and lamps burning in your hands. And you yourselves are like to men who wait for their lord . . . that when He cometh and knocketh they may open to Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching." You must watch then for the coming of the master of the house and have all ready. There are two watches you must keep. Be awake against the enemy and be awake when the Lord comes for the last time. Be awake against sin and awake against death.

It was when the master of the house was asleep, that the enemy came and sowed weeds in the wheat-field. "Watch and pray," Jesus warned His apostles, and in reply they presumed and slept. They all shared in Peter's confidence. Nothing they thought would separate them from the master. Yet they ceased to pray and they

ceased to watch. You however must not be too hard on these weary followers of Christ. They did not presume more than once. Their desertions and denials were not repeated again and again. If they turned a deaf ear to the sad cry of Jesus, "Could you not watch one hour with me?" you never read of them doing so again. They watched and prayed all their life after because they failed to watch and pray in the Garden. Will the words of Jesus have the same success with you? Are you permitting your soul to fall asleep? Are you ceasing to watch and pray? Is the enemy coming to sow in your souls evil habits, slothful ways, neglect, indifference, low standards, lax principles, all the benumbing, and deadening heaviness of sin? "But you, brethren," cries St. Paul, "are not in darkness. All you are the children of light and children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as others do,

but let us watch and be sober." The Church wishes the light never to go out before the Blessed Sacrament. You are to rival the light of the Sanctuary Lamp in your unceasing watchfulness of soul against sin.

Be awake also against death. That is the other watchfulness which Jesus teaches you to have. Be awake no matter in what watch of the night He may come, and He has told you He may come at any hour, yes, secretly even, like a thief of the night. The bridegroom came suddenly upon the sleeping bridesmaids, and those who were ready went in with bride and bridegroom to the wedding feast. The foolish virgins who had not been wary, were left forever without, knocking against a closed door and receiving no answer but the echo of their knock and the sad message that they were unknown to Him who had but a short while before invited them to be near Him at the wedding. "You know not

the day nor the hour." Now you may knock and it will be opened to you. Now you are known. Now if you pray, "Lord open to us," He will gladly comply with your request. There are two moments you are absolutely sure you will have, the present moment and the moment of your death. Whether you will have years of other moments or half a dozen other moments, God alone knows, but you know that you have the present moment, and you know that you will have the moment of your death. These are the two moments you join so often together when you say the Hail Mary. Let that prayer be on your lips at this moment, "Pray for us, sinners now and at the hour of our death." Mary will win for you watchfulness in the moment of your death. Mary will bring you to her Son. The Mother is well aware that every time Jesus comes to you, your soul is more awake and more vigilant against sin. The mother feels that if

Jesus comes now, His last coming will find you one of the servants whom He shall bless because He has found you watching. Mary, Mother of Jesus, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death!

## PRAYER

*JESUS, life and vigor of our souls, who in the sacrament of thy love seemest silent but art watchful and waking, save us by thy vigilance; visit us in the storms which beset us; and dispelling all heaviness of sin, make us by thy vivifying food every instant ready for thy last coming and ever more prepared for our eternal awakening.*

## FATHER, MOTHER AND CHILD

### *FATHER*

GOD was known as Father before Christ our Lord came, but God was to the Jews a stern Father. He protected but He punished. They were His chosen people, but He was their just and severe master. When Jesus came, He revealed God in a new light. God had been the Father, now He became our Father. Man beholds the dealings of God the Father and God the Son; man hears the Son speak to the Father and the Father to the Son. The Gospel presents to us that wonderful intercourse of earth and heaven. How you would have rejoiced to witness what the people of our Lord's time witnessed! You would have a new and more consoling idea of God, the Father.

You would learn the grandeur of the Father's house and resolve to make it a house of prayer. You would understand that the will of the Father must govern all your lives. You would rejoice that the Father had many mansions prepared for all of you. In every action of the day, in the words you uttered and the thoughts you had, you would be taught that the Father should rule you. You would hear Jesus begin His Agony with "Father, thy will be done," and His first word on the cross would be, "Father, forgive them," and His last word would be, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." If Jesus brought our Father in heaven down upon earth by His prayers and praise and teaching, He has kept our Father near us through the Blessed Sacrament. What is that most of all makes the Church the Father's house? Is it not Jesus upon the altar still urging you to make it a house of prayer? Where

are your prayers to our Father and your praise to Him filled with that love which our Heavenly Father deserves of you and demands from you? Is it not before the tabernacle? What is it that renews for you every day the Son's greatest gift to the Father? Is it not the Mass, which recalls to you your greatest debt to both Father and Son, the debt of your redemption and sanctification, the Mass which brings back to your hearts the saddest and most tender of all the times in which the Son spoke to the Father, I mean the dark hour of the Passion.

The life of Jesus revealed the Father and so too did His teaching. Nowhere have you a more touching, a more perfect picture of a father's love than from the lips of Jesus. In the books of the world's authors you will find the quiet, undemonstrative love of a father set forth for you in many a masterly sketch, but none of them show you the father's

heart as Jesus did in the parable of the Prodigal. The father had toiled all his life for his two sons. In an instant he yielded to his younger son what was asked for, bore patiently with his son's insolence, did not disown him when the son disgraced him, promptly forgot the past when his son returned and gave him a reception which could not have been exceeded, had his son come home with all the honors that the world can give instead of coming straight from a pig-pen. Perhaps the most affecting trait of the whole story and a trait which discloses for us a more than man's heart is described to us in the words: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and was moved to compassion." "A great way off!" That is a phrase which lifts the veil from that fatherly heart and lets you behold the ceaseless watch of persevering love. You can see a father's strong, penetrating glance; you can see a pair of eyes turned ever one way. Their vi-

sion may be clouded at times with a mist of regret almost verging upon despair, but you see them still waiting, still longing in wistful silence, still watching afar off. Do you see that father with a gaze expectant for a child's return, with a heart aching for a wanderer's home-coming? Then you cannot forget that the heart there described is the Heart of Jesus Himself and you cannot forget that the Father's House is here before you and the Father's embrace awaits you and His best banquet has been made ready to welcome you and bless you.

*MOTHER*

Christ our Lord did much to teach the world what father means, but Christ did more to teach the world what mother means. He honored the mother in the highest way she could be honored. Jesus might have come in the perfection of manhood, created as Adam was in the full possession of all

his qualities, but Jesus chose to dignify motherhood by making it the means through which God came to man. A human mother was the temple wherein was wrought the mystery of the Incarnation. A human mother was the first shrine for the God-man to rest in and receive homage. Jesus blessed motherhood by making His mother Mary the fairest of God's creatures, anticipating in her regard the fruits of the Redemption and interposing between her soul and the penalty of sin the brightness of God's grace which never permitted the shadow of sin to rest for one moment upon her immaculate soul. Jesus blessed human motherhood by making Himself a child and drawing from a human mother the life and sustenance of His body, entrusting Himself to her loving care, allowing Himself to be wholly dependent upon her tender devotedness. "They found the child with Mary, his mother," so the Gospel tells you. God's revealed word has united

Jesus and His mother, Mary, and who will dare separate them?

Supremely honored was Mary! Her heart was the first tabernacle of Jesus; her heart was His life, quickening His members while her spirit magnified with loving humility Her son and her God. Supremely honored indeed! Yet what of you who approach the altar-rail; who receive into your hearts the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus, who frequently, daily even, experience a new, a strange, an incomprehensible Incarnation; what is your honor and supreme happiness? If Jesus demeaned Himself to become a helpless child dependent upon the care of a tender mother, has He not demeaned Himself to more utter helplessness, becoming a fragment of bread for your food. If Jesus gave Himself to all the dear intimacy, which Mary. His mother, showered upon Him, has He not drawn near to you in another intimacy, expecting like favors of love.

If Jesus deigned to participate in His mother's life, to hang upon her breath, to be quickened by her blood and be fed by her substance, what an honor will you consider it that He should sustain you, become your food and pass into your life? Truly the mother's love which Jesus received so abundantly, He imparts to us in ever greater abundance in Communion.

Nor is it only because Jesus becomes your life-food that the tabernacle recalls a mother's love. There too He continues that life of consolation which He began for the mothers of Palestine. Jesus knew and felt the sorrows of a mother as no man ever did. He permitted the sword of sorrows to pierce His mother's heart. His birth, His early days were one series of trials for her. Around the cradle of Jesus rang the sad cries of hundreds of mothers whose babes were slain at Bethlehem. Jesus began early to fathom the sorrowful depths of mother love and never

ceased to explore new deeps even to the last moment of His mortal life when He beheld the crucifixion of a mother's heart. Yet if Jesus knew a mother's sorrows, it was to sympathize with her, to console her, to make her happy. Mary from her throne in heaven will tell you how fully Jesus rewards the sorrows of a mother. Around her are thronging the martyred babes of Bethlehem, and they forget their momentary pangs in an eternity of joy. The mother of Peter, and the mother of James and John, experienced the consolation of Jesus. The wife of Jairus and the woman of Canaan felt the heart love of Jesus when they embraced once more their daughters in the full vigor of life. The widow of Naim had touching proof of Jesus' tender condescension when she received her son at His hands back from the tomb. Mary was not forgotten amidst the sad abandonments of Calvary. If Jesus had to leave His mother, He would do what

He could to supply for His absence. You know too well—God grant it be not from personal experience of sorrow!—that in the tabernacle still Jesus is consoling the sorrows of mothers. Whether it be sickness, or suffering or death or, what is worse, whether it be black disgrace, has come to your children, where shall you go except to Jesus? To whom shall your prayers be offered? Shall it not be to Jesus, who will answer your prayers now or will lift the veil of heaven to your weeping gaze, and will come to your hearts in His own sweet presence to console you by contentment, if not by cure.

*CHILD*

On Palm Sunday Jesus reached the highest point of human approbation. Multitudes of His countrymen hail Him with acclamations of joy. They make a carpet of their colored garments and of the green boughs of the palm-tree and upon that way of tri-

umph Jesus enters into Jerusalem. The chief city of His native land joins in the enthusiasm. Jesus advances up the heights where rose the temple of God. There, as He enters, came the blind and lame and He cured them. Assuredly now at last Jesus had come unto His own. Like a conqueror He led His countrymen, became master of the capital city, and took full possession of the soul-citadel of the Jews, the temple of God, the house of His Father. At that supreme moment in the life of Jesus it was the providence of God that the children should take up the cry of the multitude, a cry which their sweet voices had often uttered in their songs on the festival. They had sung in hope of the Messias and now the reality was before them. The children of the temple greeted the Lord of the temple.

You have been privileged to witness a similar scene in the triumphal procession of the Lord of the Eucharist. Je-

sus has been entering into His kingdom. The tabernacle was not meant to be the goal of His life in the Blessed Sacrament. That is His starting-point. You have seen Him advancing day by day, enlarging the circle of His conquests. New countries have been blessed with new churches. New devotions have come to give new homage to Jesus and draw Him forth from the tabernacle. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and Exposition and the Holy Hour and Communions of Reparation and Sodalities and Pious Associations with monthly, weekly and daily Communicants, Corpus Christi with its procession, the First Friday with its devotions, and Confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, and religious both cloistered and uncloistered, making the Eucharist the supreme object of their service and adoration, these are giving enthusiastic welcome to Jesus on the altar, these are leading Him to the cit-

adel of His love's conquest, to the real temple of God, to the ultimate tabernacle of His Eucharistic presence, the hearts of mankind.

You have been privileged to witness at this point in the triumphal advance of Jesus a scene similar to that which greeted Him in His triumph in Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday. The children of God's Church have entered into the triumphal procession; their voices cry out, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Is there anyone who will join the enemies of Jesus and complain, as was done on that former day, of the song of the children and their praise? Is there anyone has misgivings that the children do not belong at the altar rail? Surely if anyone were so tempted, he will remember that the children are innocent where their elders are guilty; that the child was Jesus' model for humility where older people were proud and disobedi-

ent; that warm, loving hearts, not cold and selfish ones, are beating within the young breasts which bring Jesus to themselves from His altar home. The children have a right to their place at the altar. The children of Bethlehem shed their blood for the Christ child's entrance into the world; the children of Jerusalem sang their songs fearlessly to welcome the Christ-man's entrance into the temple. Suffer the little ones to come. Thus shall the full chorus of praise to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament be sounded. Listen to the rebuke our Lord gave the enemies of those children that welcomed Him: "Have you never read: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

PRAYER

*KINDLE in our hearts, good Jesus, the consuming fire of thy charity and bring to thy altar-rail every father, mother and*

*child, that as we find in thy Sacrament all the blessings of human affection, we may be welcomed by thee and thy Heart's tenderest love to our dear home in heaven.*

## WATER, WINE AND OIL

### *WATER*

GOD does not ask of you extraordinary things. Give Him the daily duties well done, done with His grace and blessing and He will be content. His omnipotence can ennoble the most insignificant things until they become capable of the highest effects. A cup of cold water given in the name of Jesus will open the gates of heaven, reveal to mortal eyes the vision of God Himself and delight the giver with joyous contemplation of divine Beauty, never to come to an end. Jesus in His life and in His Church teaches you what He can do with what is little and common in the eyes of man. What is more common than water? What is so weak and helpless to our way of thinking?

Water can cleanse and purify; water can cool and refresh. By man's industry water has been made to accomplish great works, move huge wheels, run vast machinery and produce countless results, beneficial to all. Water does that by giving back the power stored within it. Of itself you know water to be so weak that a child's fingers can play with it, but by the immense force of the sun, it has been lifted on high and has fallen back in rain upon the high hills. In its currents remains yet the power which put it on the hills, and as it flows downward, it distributes that power. If man and nature can do so much with water, you are not surprised that God can do more. Jesus used and blessed the common things of life. From them He drew His lessons; and with them He accomplished wonders. The saliva on His lips might be made to heal the deaf and dumb. Jesus then took water and raised it higher than the sun does and gave it a greater

power than the energy of a flowing current. Jesus made water an instrument for imparting the grace of God. The great waterfalls of the world are mere pygmies in the work they perform if you compare them with the work done in time and eternity by the fall of a few drops of water in Baptism. Jesus commanded the waves of the sea and they obeyed Him and were still. Jesus commanded the waters of the world, and in obedience to Him the waters cleanse away sin, make a child of God and fill every human soul with a collection of divine and everlasting wonders.

Water has power and water has sweetness too. The fevered brow, the soiled hands, the parched tongue, are refreshed with the cooling and cleansing flow of water. The traveler toiling over the dry sands, burning, begrimed and thirsty, becomes a new man in the silver currents of a river or lake and is strong and happy for the next stage

of his journey. Jesus was travel-worn and parched with thirst when He asked the Samaritan woman for a draught of water. She could refresh Him in body but He could give her more marvellous, more enduring refreshment. "He that shall drink of the water I shall give," so Jesus told her and tells you, "shall not thirst forever. But the water I shall give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." What is this water of life of which you read so much in the New Testament? It is the grace and help of God. It is the flow of holy thoughts within the mind. It is the stream of contrite love which washes away sin. It is the sparkling, sunlit happiness which courses through the parched soul and fills its dark, forbidding depths with fathomless tides of peace. Where will you find the waters of life? You must draw them from the fountains of the Saviour. The world like the Samari-

tan woman does not know and does not ask but you know and you should ask, and Jesus will give to you. If many reject the streams of God's grace or accept them only to pollute their crystal currents, you will draw from grace's most plenteous fountain in the Blessed Eucharist and enjoy the refreshment Jesus offers you there. He does not hold out to your thirsting lips a cup of cold water. Jesus presents you in the sacrament of His love a vessel brimming with divine contents, His body rich in saving blood.

### *WINE*

Water is a picture of the purifying and refreshing powers of divine grace. Wine is a picture of its invigorating strength. Water speaks of consolation; wine speaks of enthusiastic fervor. Jesus changed the water into wine at Cana in Galilee because there was need of wine. So in your hearts if you need purifying from sin or con-

solation and refreshment in the journey of life, Jesus will give you to drink of the living waters. But perhaps you need courage; perhaps you are wounded; then God's grace will be as wine to warm your cold purposes with new heart for the struggle and to staunch your wounds with a healing smart. Perhaps you may be about to be nailed to your cross. You have been hardly treated by all. You have been laughed at and scorned. The lash has fallen on your shoulders but worse is the cutting sting of a contemptuous word. The thorns have pierced your brow but keener are the pangs of ingratitude. The spear is about to pierce your heart, but your spirit is pierced more deeply with some wrong which you think could not be deadlier, whose iron, you say to yourself, is buried within forever. Ah, then, if you are feeling like that, you need some of the vintage of Christ; you must put your lips where you can catch the blood-

red drippings from the wine-press which Jesus trod alone and of all mankind none was with Him. When Jesus was about to be nailed to His cross, they gave to Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh. It was well-meant charity but it was worldly, pagan charity. Christ would not be drugged and stupefied. He would have none of what modern pagans call euthanasia. He would not suffer one pang less or be less sensitive to any throb of pain. Jesus had the wine of God, not the wine of the world in His veins. God's wine fires and invigorates. It does not drug and stupefy. And you if you are facing your crucifixion, you must not turn to any worldly opiates. Stubborn hatred or steeling of the heart, rigid and unyielding pride, frenzied dissipation, these are wine mingled with myrrh; they are not wine of the grapes of God, they are not of the vintage of Golgotha but the dregs and lees of Haceldama. Quaff of the fruit of the

vine which kept Jesus courageous and humble. Touch not that unholy drink which led to the pride and despair of Judas.

When Jesus heard His Mother, Mary, whisper to Him at the marriage-feast in Cana, "They have no wine," His heart melted with pity for the embarrassment of the new couple, and Jesus performed a stupendous miracle to do an act of kindness. He saw, it is true, that His mission would be helped in many ways by this changing of water into wine, but His first motive in acting was that suggested by His Mother, the momentary need of the banquet, "They have no wine." That was the beginning of the miracles of Jesus. Three years later when He came to His last night upon earth, He saw a greater need. He saw the souls of men and your souls disheartened, not by any slight embarrassment like that at Cana but rather stricken down and left half-dead upon the way of life, like

the traveler found by the good Samaritan. Once again the suggestion of His Mother must have come to Him, "They have no wine." To be strong against evil, to drag along wounded limbs, to face death, to do all this and a thousand more difficult duties, would call for courage and fervor. "They have no wine," Jesus thought, and as He had made wine of water, so now He made blood of wine. Truly Jesus kept His best wine to the last. Would you have courage and feel the warmth of fervor thrill in your veins, receive you all the blood of the Lord, crying, "Blood of Christ, be strong wine for me! Passion of Christ, give me heart from Thee."

*OIL*

The grace of God refreshes like water, invigorates like wine and imparts cheerfulness like oil. The psalmist praises God for His gifts: "The earth shall be filled with the fruit of

thy works . . . that wine may cheer the heart of man; that he make the face cheerful with oil." Again at another time the psalmist unites the oil and wine: "Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly is it!" Oil had many uses among the Jews. It gave strength as a food; it was used as a medicine; it was a light to illuminate the darkness. There were many reasons for calling it the "oil of gladness" as it was often called. Jesus, however, made of it, as He made of the other necessities of life, a means of imparting His grace. As He did to wine and water, so also to oil Jesus imparted a divine force. The oil of Extreme Unction will be an oil of gladness to you as you draw near to death. The apostles "anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them." The Good Samaritan poured oil and wine into the wounds of the stricken traveler. Mary Magdalen anointed the feet of Jesus

and then on another occasion His head. The wise Virgins went in rejoicing because they had their vessels filled with oil. So you see how deservedly this substance has been called the oil of gladness, and though the grace of God can and does give all virtues, you are right in thinking of cheerfulness when you think of the oil which found a place in the life of Jesus and became through Him an instrument of grace.

Oil finds a place too in the Blessed Sacrament. It feeds the lamp which burns near the altar. You can be grateful to the generous oil which gives of its whole substance to honor its hidden Lord. If that burning oil could speak, it would tell of many a sad heart which left a dead weight of sorrow beneath its rays and went away cheered by what is still an oil of gladness. The oil comes closer still to the Blessed Sacrament. You know that the fingers of the priest which touch the sacred species are anointed with oil

and consecrated to that holy duty. The hand which holds aloft your God for adoration during Mass and which lays the consecrated particle upon your tongue, has been specially blessed with oil to be better fitted to bring Jesus to you. Let then the oil of grace make your face cheerful. Go forth to your work with the happiness of God beaming in your face. Banish the dark look of hatred; dispel the frown of impatience; hush the bitter murmur of complaint; make every word and every moment and every glance, sweet and gentle and tender with the oil of gladness. Even though you go to pain and suffering, go like the apostles of Jesus who went to persecution rejoicing. The number of foolish virgins is, alas, far too great. Few are they who have their vessels filled with oil and are ready to enter in with the Bridegroom. Draw near to the anointed hands of the priest that they may bring to your souls the oil of God's gladness and that

you may console the saddened Bridegroom for those who come not near the altar of God and who must therefore hear forever the sad sentence of divine abandonment: "Amen I say to you, I know you not."

## PRAYER

*LORD, Lord, bestow upon us the graces typified and granted through water, wine and oil, that refreshed, strengthened and made glad by thy gracious gifts, we may enjoy to the full in thy eternal home the blessedness of which it is permitted us to have a foretaste at thy altar.*

## WOLF, LION AND LAMB

### *WOLF*

"BEWARE of false prophets who come to you in the clothing of sheep but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." In these words Jesus warns you against false prophets who would destroy your faith. The same words warn you against other deceitful and lying prophets who promise much to their deluded dupes and finally with their lies and deceptions unmasked are shown to be even more ravenous wolves than the prophets of unbelief. Evil passions make more perverts from the faith than do teachers of false doctrines. Passions disguise themselves; unbelief today displays itself brazenly. More Catholics give up the practice of their faith because of difficulties with the ten

commandments than because of difficulties with the creed. When a man habitually violates a commandment, he finds it hard to believe in the necessity of the command or the power and supremacy of the Commander. The history of the Church and your own experience of life have taught you that the sheep of Christ's flock perish in greater numbers from lack of morality than from lack of belief. A pet passion is the best argument Satan has against dogma. Do people give up their belief in the perpetual bond of marriage, as revealed by Christ and taught by the Church, because they have had their minds clarified by reasons or because they have had their hearts wholly blinded by passion?

You know well the mischief done by the ravenous wolves of passion, and consider now a more alarming truth about these savage passions. They do not come openly. You do not see at once their greedy eyes or feel their hot breath

or behold the sharp teeth of their gluttonous jaws. No, the wolves become like sheep. The passions disguise themselves and hide their burning desires and foul, greedy appetites. The passions parade as virtues. Envy comes in the garb of zeal; pride in the garb of nobility of soul. Sloth clothes itself in moderation; lust in kindness and charity; ambition in earnestness and the spirit of enterprise; anger in righteous indignation. All these disguises of the evil passions are beautiful virtues and would be desirable if they were not made the cloak for evil. How fair and shining and yielding to the touch are the silver white fleeces of the sheep but these attractions are all the more dangerous if they become the masks for dark and ravenous wolves. Beware of those false prophets who come to you in such clothing!

Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will be your guardian and strengthener against these dangerous passions. His

wonderful Sacrament meets the passions at their source. Jesus keeps the fountains of desire pure and cool and ever fresh and so the streams are preserved from soiling pollution. You know that the passions are necessary to man and are sinful because of their excesses. There must be desire of food, but there must not be gluttony; there must be thirst, but there must not be intemperance. The passions like fire and electricity are useful and good when they are made the slaves of man; fire and electricity are fearful monsters when they escape from man's control. Jesus, therefore, in the Blessed Sacrament makes the passions of hunger and thirst the means of your sanctification. Jesus becomes food. If the evil passions hide their hideous looks in sheep's clothing, Jesus to disarm the fear and timidity of His children veils Himself in the snow-white fleeces of bread. Jesus too becomes drink. Jesus took the deadly wine and made it the chan-



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nel of life. The wine of inflamed passions, the wine which ruins and destroys, is changed into the wine springing forth virgins. Jesus makes Himself your food and drink. That is one way in which He anticipates evil passions and robs them of their prey. There is too another way in which Jesus purifies passion at its sources. He, as food, enters into your very body and passes on to all the tingling nerves and to the warm surging blood. His presence, it is true, departs when the outward appearance of the bread passes away but His grace remains, and that substance which was once His body may well be called holy still. The Church has ever considered sacred the substance which once formed the Blessed Sacrament and is careful that it is not desecrated in any way. But whatever may be said of your bodies fed upon the Bread of the altar, your souls have received abundantly of the grace of God. If the passions respond to bodily needs and are

rooted deep in flesh and blood, the grace which fills the soul will serve to check evil passions at their first growth because the soul is the principle and source of all the life of the body. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will enlighten the mind to see through the deceptions of passion at the very outset, will strengthen the will to tear off the disguise and throttle the wolves while yet they are weak and will no doubt allay that fever in the blood which kindles helpful instincts into wild, raging frenzies.

### *LION*

"Be sober and watch because your adversary the devil, as a raging lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour." The lion, like the wolf, was a dreaded enemy of the people of Judea. The Judeans were shepherds of flocks and they knew their worst enemies, the wolf and the lion. David kept his father's sheep and in that duty stran-

gled a lion which had taken one of his flock. That courageous deed was enough to convince King Saul that David was not a mere boy but a fit champion to meet the mighty Goliath. Jesus, therefore, and His apostles called the enemies of their flocks and of men's souls, wolves and lions. Wolves, you heard, were treacherous and stealthy and captured their prey by deception. Lions are mightier beasts. They leap upon their foes with a roar and seem to scorn any concealment. So St. Peter likened Satan to a raging lion. You learned that the passions deceive because they are perverted good desires, because they put on the appearance of virtue, and so are like the wolves. Do the passions ever become raging lions? Alas, all know too well that a time comes when the passions throw aside all concealment and like the mighty monarch of the forest pounce upon their prey with a roar. That stage of the passions is the

stage of formed habit. When indulged passion becomes a habit, ravenous wolves become devouring lions.

Happy are the men who have the Lion of the tribe of Juda to meet and overcome the roaring lion of the habitual passions! The Good Shepherd of the altar defends His flocks against lion as well as against wolf. In our day when medical science is making a closer study of evil habits and is discovering that many of the worst and most horrible habits of age are the outcome of acts committed in childhood, you should thank God that the children are drawn earlier to Communion. The early confession enables the child to relieve its oppressed conscience by consoling confession; the resolution of the soul will break off practices before they have hardened into habits; the frequent Communion will fill their young hearts with holy thoughts and holy desires and so starve the unholy suggestions and tendencies of newly awakened passions.

The Blessed Sacrament can conquer evil habits as well as prevent their formation. David was a type of Jesus and is a type of Him still when Jesus slays the monster Goliath of habit. Well might the will look like a pygmy when it faces a habit which has grown to giant size by repeated indulgence. What a huge, frightful thing it is, swollen and insolent, clad in iron, blustering and boasting and laughing to scorn the puny efforts of the stripling will! Yet if the will arm itself with the Blessed Sacrament, the Goliath of the soul will measure its huge bulk on the ground beside the first Goliath. What is the remedy proposed by St. Peter against the lion-roar of Satan? It is faith and courage. "Resist ye," cries St. Peter, strong in faith. "The God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will himself perfect you and confirm you and establish you." Faith and courage led David to

victory; faith and courage can conquer any habit; faith and courage come in abundance through the Blessed Sacrament. There is nothing in all our religion which makes more frequent calls upon our faith and so exercises it more than the Blessed Sacrament.

To the courageous confidence of the first attack must be added perseverance if the roaring of the lion is to be stilled. Habit is to be overcome by habit and we know it can be. The soul that has gone down step by step to the depths of hell cannot expect to leap out of the pit in one swift flight. The victim of a habit needs companionship. Jesus may be visited any time; may be received daily. The victim of habit needs a refuge in his own soul against his own fearful thoughts; he will find it in gratitude for the last visit of Jesus in Communion and in repentance and joy for the next visit. The will weakened by one habit must be strengthened by a new habit. Here again he will find in the

tabernacle and at the altar by repeated Communions ever new strength for his soul. If you know any soul whose ears are filled by the roaring lion of evil habit, then tell that soul to have faith, to have courage, to form a new habit, to feed upon the food of the "Lion of the tribe of Juda, of the root of David."

*LAMB*

The people of Judea hated the wolf and the lion because they loved their sheep. Sheep were their precious possessions, their silver and gold, and their enemies were detested as much as the sheep themselves were held in high regard. What then was the tenderness of affection which the Judean showed to the lambs of the flock? The lambs were all the more precious because they were so weak and helpless. The lamb was a spiritual treasure too for Judea. The lamb became the choice sacrifice in the temple and formed part of the most touching feasts of the Jews. Wealth,

history, life, religion, were enshrined in the tender lamb. What a touching title therefore that was which the Baptist gave to Jesus! "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world!" No wonder the disciples of John the Baptist became followers of Jesus. If Jesus was the Lamb of God then He would be the love of Israel and their leader. No wonder the Church took those words of John the Baptist and put them on the lips of the priest when he turns and holds up the Blessed Sacrament for your adoration at Communion time: "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Surely the title of Lamb of God will have no less charm today to attract the hearts of men than it had when the Baptist first used the words to greet Jesus. It would take long to tell all the meaning found in that tender title of the Lamb of God, but you will no doubt be pleased to study it in connection with the wolf and the lion. The lambs of

men are the prey of wolf and lion but the Lamb of God is master and conqueror of these ferocious beasts. The heart which welcomes into it the Lamb of God will drive out the wolves and lions. The Lamb of God will teach patience and gentleness and no virtue is more necessary in the unceasing war with the passions. Many a soul has grown weary in the fight against the wild instincts of the flesh; many a soul in a fit of impatience has ceased to struggle and in angry despair has allowed the savage passions to have their way. Patience is most necessary, patience with weak wills, patience in the face of repeated relapses, patience against persistent habits, patience for a long, bloody fight. No evil habit can be subdued in a day. Strength indeed is necessary but it is strength with patience. The grace of God must make the will generous to rise to a heroic resolution and make the will patient to continue a conflict where many defeats

are bound to be. In the Lamb of God you will find that strength and patience if you need them. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will make you strong because He is God, and will make you patient because under the fleeces of bread He is a tender lamb and a perfect model of gentle meekness.

To complete the conquest of passion one more thing must be done. The will must be made strong. Evil passion is exaggerated and perverted selfishness. Anything that weakens selfishness deals a death blow at the heart of passion. When you make the will strong, it means that you govern will by principle rather than by desire. And how can you make the will strong? There is one certain way, the way of sacrifice. If the passions tyrannize over the will and whirl it away to the indulgence of self, sacrifice teaches the will to relinquish even what is pleasing and so makes it strong against its tyrant. Give up self, and passions are routed utterly. Who

will teach that stern but fruitful lesson of sacrifice? Who else but the Lamb of God, the perfect type of perfect sacrifice? "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh the sins of the world!" The sacrifice of Jesus has in fact atoned for all the sad crimes of passion, and the same sacrifice is a lesson to every weak will. But although Jesus took away the guilt of sin, each soul must grow strong against new indulgence, against old habits, and there is no better way of doing that than by refusing to self even what is lawful, by making self take some pain because it has indulged in too much pleasure, in a word, by making oneself a sacrifice, another lamb like to Jesus, the true Lamb of God, Who was dumb in the hands of the shearers, Whose blood has reddened the gates of every sanctified soul, Who is offered for you daily on the altar of the Mass and comes to you daily if so you wish, as your food and comfort and enduring strength.

## PRAYER

*MOST kind Jesus, who art the Good Shepherd, guard thy flock against all adversaries, be they ravenous wolves or roaring lions, and lavish upon us true knowledge against deceits, sure strength against violent passions, that with all our sins taken away, our souls may be made white to thy look and we be deemed worthy to pass from the banquet of the altar to the heavenly supper of the Lamb.*

## HOME, SCHOOL AND CHURCH

### *HOME*

JESUS loved home and blessed home. He gave ten times as much of His life to home as He gave to the world. Think of the homes He filled with joy during the three short years of His public life. He sent the leper home. The leper was an outcast, was shunned and kept at a distance, living in caves and grave-yards. Jesus cleansed the lepers and sent them home. "Take up thy bed," Jesus said to the man sick of palsy, "and go into thy house." He was one of a multitude which wended its way homeward, able to talk or able to see or able to hear and all filling some house with peace and merriment. How death destroys a home! Many a family separates at the

grave never to come together again. Jesus drove off the arch destroyer of homes, and sisters received their brother and the father his child and the widowed mother her only son. Worse still for the unity of the home is the sinner. The memory of the dead remains and is spoken of. The disgrace of the home is never mentioned and is buried, as far as may be, in oblivion. Jesus brought the sinners home. Magdalen is loved and honored, and not a word or even a thought is given to the past. She is back and it is home again. The Prodigal sits down once more with his father and receives a hearty welcome from all, yes, even from his brother, if not on the first day, at least, so let us hope, on the next or the day after.

Jesus was indeed a home-maker, and Jesus is the same to-day as in Palestine. There is not a broken home anywhere which He is not able to mend and anxious to mend. Whatever is needed in your homes or in any homes you

know of, whether it be health or life or kindness or virtue, Jesus can give and does give to-day from His home on the altar. If He does not cure all sickness or suffering, it is because He can do better than cure it. He blesses your pain. He makes a prayer of your pain. By it He fills heaven with ransomed souls and rewards you with fuller measures of eternal joy. If Jesus does not give back your dead, it is because He is making a better home for all your loved ones whom He is calling to Himself one after another. And what was it brought the Prodigal home? "In my father's house," he cried, "bread abounds." That same thought has drawn many another sinner to the altar and so to innocence again and to the forgiveness and peace of home.

But you will say, if Jesus makes homes, He breaks them too. Has He not spoken sternly, coldly, harshly of home? Did He not say? "He who loves father or mother more than me,

is not worthy of me." "He who hates not father and mother cannot be my disciple." It is true that Jesus uttered these words and others like them but those who live up to such teaching do not destroy homes. Jesus wished the homes to be united by duty and by God's will, not by selfishness. He who follows God's will is not a stranger to home wherever he goes. The hearts of those who so act are near to home and to all at home. It is not bodily presence but presence of the heart which makes home and so it is that the nearer to God, the nearer to home. He who loves father and mother more than God, most frequently loves father and mother for his own sake. He seeks self and will love home as long as it is to his advantage. He who loves father and mother for the sake of God, never takes his heart away from home wherever his feet may stray. So if Jesus seems to break up homes, it is only that He may unite them better, as a sur-

geon will break again a badly knitted bone that it may heal properly. He will not tolerate a life-long crippling in order to avoid a slight pain now.

The Blessed Sacrament has always been a uniter. At the altar-rail we are all equal, all friends, all of one great family, all of God's home. Then too the Bread of the altar teaches you how God's will can make a home. The separate grains of wheat are crushed and cleansed of chaff and ground together and kneaded together and baked until they become one, fair, white host whose substance Jesus makes His own. If each grain locked itself up in a hard, unyielding case, it would be almost as difficult to make bread of wheat as of hickory nuts. Selfishness is the shell which keeps the home divided. The will of God is the mill of God which will grind out all selfishness and leave the white kernel ready to blend into bread. Jesus in His altar home will make your home one if you unite around

His table and make God's will the rule of life.

### *SCHOOL*

Jesus went to school mostly, we believe, at His mother's knee, but one day He went away to school. He left mother and foster-father. He did not tell them where He was going. He permitted their hearts to be filled with anxiety and grief. It was a moment of tremendous importance in the life of the Christ Child when He remained in the temple and took His place in the school-room there. On that occasion it was that Jesus uttered His first recorded words. These words were spoken at school and brought a blessing upon school. The first Christian school was then opened in sorrow and sacrifice, consecrated to the work of God, and marked out by heaven to be the place where Jesus first told us that He was engaged in the things of the Father.

All knowledge, as the old saying has

it, makes a bloody entrance, but no knowledge inflicts keener pain than the knowledge of God's will. When you make up your mind to be a pupil in that school, you must be prepared for all that Jesus endured when He went away to school. Misunderstandings, complaints, suffering for self and others, loss of home and parents and friends, gloom and wanderings in the night and bitter tears, these and a hundred other sorrows will be on one hand, and on the other will be just the will of God, the business of the Father. Oh, if Jesus were not now in our temples, you would find the daily lesson of God's will a hard one but you know that He is there to meet you when you seek Him sorrowing and He is willing and anxious to go down with you into your homes and into your lives comforting and consoling you after every sacrifice you make for the business of the Father.

Jesus kept a school. He was an attractive teacher. "Learn of me," He

said to all. "I am meek and humble of heart." Jesus was not fiery and arrogant like the Pharisees who were the teachers opposed to Him. Jesus was a patient and persevering teacher. Consider what pupils He had in His own friends and followers. Hundreds of times He repeated a lesson; hundreds of times they forgot it, but Jesus was patient with their dullness and persevered despite their failures until He completed their education. Of a tax-gatherer He made an evangelist; of fishermen He made leaders of men and writers of wisdom; of all He made Saints and martyrs. Jesus was a tireless teacher. For thirty years He taught the hard lessons of silence, obscurity and humility. Hungering in the bleak desert, parched upon hot and dusty roads, toiling up the steep hills or tossing on the stormy sea, everywhere and at all times Jesus kept open His school. Jesus was a fearless teacher. His pupils might disown Him or be-

tray Him; His enemies might oppose Him on every side, might calumniate Him, might torture, insult and slay Him, still Jesus kept open His school and, rising from the grave where He was thought to be buried, He ordered His apostles and disciples to go and teach all nations. The school of Jesus was always to be kept open.

Yes, you know that Jesus has not closed His school and you have felt that He is still teaching with all the charm and patience and perseverance and tirelessness and courage with which He kept school in Palestine. Some of His pupils come but rarely to Him and master but few of His lessons. Others come day by day to the school of Jesus, it is narrow but world-wide; it is hidden but everywhere. All find the teacher attractive. If He teaches humility, He is practising it Himself. If He gives the lesson of patience, He is a model of that difficult virtue. If He asks His pupils to be kind and charitable, they

will not refuse to learn that lesson because Jesus, their teacher, is infinitely kind and divinely charitable. He refuses Himself to no one and to no place. He goes to new friends and to old friends, to treacherous friends and to true ones. If any one does not receive all that Jesus offers, it is not the fault of the Teacher's generous kindness because He gives Himself fully but rather the fault of the pupils because they will not receive Him at all or do not master all His lessons from lack of generosity.

*CHURCH*

When Jesus was found by His sorrowing parents amidst the doctors of the temple, you see home, school and church united in one great scene of our Lord's life. As then, so on almost every other occasion, there was trouble when Jesus went to the church of His day. At His presentation Simeon uttered disturbing words of prophecy: "the ruin and destruction of many," "a

sign of contradiction," and the occasion of a sword piercing His mother's soul. At twelve years of age Jesus went to the temple, breaking up a home, paining mother and foster-father and filling all with wonder. The next recorded visit was made when Satan took Jesus and set Him upon a pinnacle of the temple. Later He visited the temple in person and drove out with lash in hand the buyers and sellers. His miracle, His teachings, His simple visits, all seemed to break in upon the solemn calm of that holy spot and upset places and persons. When Jesus went into synagogues throughout Palestine, there was the same disturbance. At Nazareth His own townsmen hurried Him from their synagogue and wished to throw Him from a cliff.

What was it that caused these mighty upheavals, these moral shocks which finally overthrew the temple entirely? It was the fact that the Church of that day had ceased to be the Church. The

house of God had become a den of thieves. The temple rejected the Messiah and cast forth its Savior. Yes, it endeavored to destroy the Son of God. You remember it was the representatives of the temple who persecuted Jesus and plotted His death. You recall how Jesus compared His body to the temple, a body which might be destroyed but in three days would be built up again, and you know that one of the means used to effect the death of Jesus was that comparison. You have read too how the veil of the temple was rent when Jesus died. No more would He visit it. It was doomed and in a few years it would be levelled to the ground and would be forever the death-stone of a nation's apostasy, a lasting memorial of God's just anger.

When you think of this struggle of Jesus with a power which had ceased to represent the will of God and had to be opposed and utterly removed, you will thank God that Jesus does not come

to your temples and your altars as He came of old. You see Him, not with lash in hand, not driving out cowards, not rending veils and dislodging stones, but coming as a God of peace and joy, allowing Himself to be borne here and there, drawing all to Himself and blessing all. Yet you are well aware that the Church is still a scene of conflict. You must fight your way to the Church through crowds of unbelievers or indifferent men and women. You must overcome sloth and rise superior to sneering ridicule. And when you have made your way inside the Church, you must by penance and confession fight your way up the Church aisles to the altar rail. Nor does the conflict then stop. You must fight ceaselessly to keep yourselves in the Church and before the tabernacle and at the altar rail. The victory is worth it all. The peace of God will come to you. You will be the temples of the Holy Ghost. You will welcome to your hearts the Prince

of Peace and make of them houses of prayer.

## PRAYER

*LORD JESUS, Lion of the tribe of Juda, who hast told us to fear not because thou hast conquered the world, help us, we pray thee, in the never ceasing conflict which rages about our homes, schools and Church, that with thy families united and thy children rightly reared thy Church may continue to sanctify the souls of men and by waging the battles of time deserve to win the victorious crown of eternity.*

## READING, WRITING AND COUNTING

### *READING*

"HAVE you not read?" Jesus frequently asks those about Him. With that question He answers difficulties, removes doubts, teaches the highest truths. So it is Jesus recalls to the Jews the example of David, the law of Moses, the lessons of the prophets, the virtues of the patriarchs, and the word of God. The wisdom of God and the guiding providence of God were recorded in the teaching and history of the sacred books of the Jews. Jesus did not set aside the Old Testament, but He added to it. The word of God in the new Church which Jesus founded was to be recognized in the living voice as well as in the dead page. "He who

hears you, hears me," said Christ to His apostles. "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican." To the Jews therefore Jesus said, "Have you not read?" To us He says, "Have you not heard and read?" But in both cases it is an appeal to God's word and God's authority. It was God who spoke to the Jews from the written page: it is God who speaks to you in the printed volume of His Revelation or in the living voice of His Church. The answer in both cases should be the same, "I have read and heed." "I have heard and I obey." God speaks, I believe; God commands, I act. Practical faith is the lesson taught by the repeated question of Jesus, "Have you not read?"

You need an active, loving faith for all of God's revealed truth, but nowhere is such a faith more necessary than towards the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament comes

very near to man, being touched by man's hands, seen by man's eyes, passing man's lips and becoming man's food. To believe in God who thunders His laws from a mountain and hides Himself away in places inaccessible is fairly easy, though not consoling, but to see God in a particle of bread, dissolving upon the tongue, calls for a lively faith. The very condescension which makes Jesus stoop down to our weakness makes it harder for our souls to raise themselves to God's infinite grandeur. The familiarity of the Blessed Sacrament, which in our times by daily Communion, and early Communion, has been made a greater familiarity, is one supreme reason for the special necessity of faith towards Jesus in the tabernacle, and the sublimity of the mysteries connected with the Blessed Sacrament requires too a practical faith. How the mind is bewildered by the wonders which cluster around the consecrated host! Jesus is there with

His body and blood, with His soul and divinity; Jesus is there in the whole host and in every part of it; Jesus is there and at the same time in millions of other places. Although every sense bears witness to the presence of bread, the substance of that bread has disappeared and has changed into the body and blood of Christ. Such are some of the marvellous mysteries of which the tabernacle is the home.

You must then recall often to your minds the question Jesus put to the Jews, "Have you not read?" You must have faith. God has spoken; God is to be believed; God is to be obeyed. You have read how God prepared the world for the Blessed Sacrament by sending manna from heaven. You have read how Jesus promised to give His body to eat and His blood to drink. You have read that at the Last Supper Jesus said, "This is my body; this is my blood. Do this for a commemoration of me." You have read how century

after century holy men and learned men bore witness to that truth and explained it and proved it and died for it. You have read how the Church of Christ cast out those who denied that truth. You have read how one great writer has cried out, "Lord, if we are deceived in the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament, you have deceived us." You have read all this and you too believe. Infinite power, infinite love are needed to give you God under the appearance of bread. You have heard and know that God has that infinite power and infinite love, and you believe that Jesus is upon the altar, is on your tongue and finds a home in your heart.

### *WRITING*

Did Jesus write? No writings of His remains to us. Jesus spoke and taught by word of mouth and ordered His apostles to preach, but we do not read that He ordered them to write. You remember, however, the one occa-

sion upon which Jesus is said to have written. His enemies brought to Him a sinful woman. They had little mercy for her; they had less mercy for Jesus. They wished to place Him in such a position that He would, as His enemies thought, either be wanting in mercy or wanting in justice. If Jesus condemned the sinner, where would be His love for the fallen? If Jesus refused to condemn the sinner, He would put Himself against the law of Moses. The wisdom of the Savior did not find it hard to avoid these extremes. He announced a principle which for all time to come, now as well as then, will save mercy without offending justice. The law against sin remains, but its application must be tempered by mercy. The enforcer of the law must remember that he too is human. Listen to the wonderful rule which Jesus has given us, a rule which blends in one marvellous compound the sweetness of mercy with the severity of justice: "He that

is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone."

Just before and just after Jesus gave us all that lesson, He is described as stooping down and writing with His finger on the ground. Who can ever forget that writing of Jesus? The strange, the solemn, the mysterious setting in which Christ our Lord enshrined a bright jewel of merciful truth. Did Jesus write the sins of the accusers on the ground, showing them that there as often elsewhere He read the hearts of men? Some have thought so. If you believe Jesus wrote those sins, recall that they were written in sand, not like the condemnation of Baltassar inscribed upon the wall for his doom, but in the sand where the lightest wind of heaven might blot out the account. Perhaps you prefer to believe with others that Jesus did not write any sins, but simply stooped and wrote to show that He ignored the accusers or did not wish to set His searching glance upon them

that He might not embarrass them. It is in keeping with the rest of the scene that the writing of Jesus should be considered an act of kindness to the accusers. So the writing of Jesus will recall to you always that your stained and sinful hands are not to grip and throw stones at those who have sinned, that you must be merciful to all, even to those who are trying to destroy you.

Jesus wrote in the sand; Jesus writes too in your souls. St. Paul says to His Corinthians: "You are the letter of Christ." They were the letters of Christ either because Christ was written there or because Christ wrote there. St. Paul had erased from the fleshy tablets of those pagan hearts all falsehood and vice and wrote there the truth and life of Jesus. Letters of friendship are full of friendship. St. Paul's Christians were letters of Christ because their hearts were replete with Christ's example and teaching. In another sense, too, the Corinthians were

letters of Christ. "The Spirit of the living God" had impressed upon the hearts of the Corinthians all the Christian virtues. The angels might see there as if branded in letters of fire, faith, hope and charity, mercy, justice and kindness, and a host of other powers which equip all souls, made by grace to be the friends of God. As the Corinthians of old, you also are the letters of Christ. You listen, as you are now doing, to the lessons of His life and imprint them upon your hearts indelibly. You too have within you the Spirit of the living God writing there new virtues which make you more like Christ, or you are retracing in clearer letters virtues already gained. Grace comes to you through all prayer and all the Sacraments. But where especially are you the letters of Christ? Is it not at Communion? A letter brings as much of our friends to us as we can receive when they are absent. When your hearts welcome Christ in the Blessed

Sacrament, they are most precious letters, not holding a word or two of an absent friend but enshrining a guest from heaven. During those holy moments "the Spirit of the living God" is active and upon your spirits are inscribed the virtues of Christ, virtues especially of mercy and kindness to those who have been guilty of faults. May the hand of Christ write that lesson indelibly on your hearts!

### *COUNTING*

Counting and accounting were works which Christ our Lord understood very well. There was no secret of business unknown to Him. So His parables testify. Sometimes the counting of Jesus was most exact and that was whenever there was a question of justice. Give to every man his penny is the teaching of one of Christ's parables. The cruel servant in another parable is sentenced to be cast into prison until he pays the whole debt. You remem-

ber too how strict Jesus makes the master who gave his servants money to invest for him. Two servants doubled the amount given to them, but one made no use at all of what he had received. How angry the master was that his money had been buried in the earth, wasted when it should have been gaining interest! These are all pictures of Jesus when He is just. Poor, weak human nature shrinks with fear when it thinks of the justice of God and it would not care to consider Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as a judge. Nor is Jesus a judge there in that home of infinite mercy, yet He exercises justice there and He keeps account of the use you make of His talents. You could be doubling your capital at the altar-rail. You could be adding to the riches of God's grace and be preparing yourself to hear Jesus say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." But perhaps you are not making the full use you might of God's favors. You

are not prepared with all the faith and hope and love you should have, and as Jesus is just, He gives you grace according to your dispositions. Perhaps your many Communions and visits and Masses find you still very imperfect. Jesus is just. He gives you grace according to your willingness to correspond and make use of what He gives. You must trade with the treasure entrusted to you whether it is little or great. You must not discontinue visits or Communions because you do not feel better. Sanctity does not consist in feeling. To see your failings more clearly often means an increase of sanctity. Keep on despite discouragement. Don't run off and bury any talent. Use what you have and you will get more.

If Jesus counts exactly and accurately when He is just, He seems to count another way when He is merciful and loving. God can be exacting in His justice with us because He is infi-

nitely wise and cannot make a mistake, but we who make mistakes must not be too exacting with one another. The Jews had a way of counting which the love of Jesus did not approve of. They said, "An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth." "No," replied Jesus; "you do not count as I wish. I say to you not to resist evil, but if one strike you on the right cheek, turn to him also the other." What a strange way too of counting Jesus had with converted sinners! "There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that doth penance than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." The arithmetic of Jesus seems to be wrong. He leaves ninety-nine in order to find one. And look what He does with five loaves. He feeds five thousand and even with all that generous abundance there is none of the exact measuring you see where each man has a penny, but it is rather, let five thousand have all they want and let there be plenty over and above to

spare. In the Blessed Sacrament it is the love and mercy of Jesus which does the counting. How lavish is Jesus at the altar! From the Last Supper to the last Communion count, if you can, how many times Jesus has travelled the way He loves into the hearts of men. Think what it will be from now on. The little children will come in multitudes and throngs will flock daily to Communion. It is not now five loaves for five thousand, but one Bread of life for all men all the days of their lives. What has he received and what will he receive in return? Alas! nothing or worse than nothing, neglect, coldness and insult! That is the way Jesus counts: everything for us; worse than nothing for Himself.

PRAYER

*LORD of generous mercy and loving justice, who in the days of thy life taught us faith, kindness and generosity, bestow*

*upon us through the most wonderful of all thy sacraments these virtues in their full perfection that even in the simplest actions which we daily perform, we may be mindful of thy life and lessons and merit the everlasting rewards of thy love.*

## GRASS, REEDS AND THORNS

### *GRASS*

YOU will not see many descriptions of places in the Gospels. The word of God is concerned more with persons than with places. Why then do you find the evangelists picking out a trivial bit of scenery to serve as a background for one of our Lord's deeds? Matthew halts his story to say there was grass in a certain place; Mark tells us the grass was green; John adds that the grass was abundant. You will say it was spring-time and that the fresh, new grass was sprouting luxuriantly with no sign of any withering to come. Perhaps the evangelists wished to point out the time; perhaps the spot was a fertile one in a desert place, an oasis near a spring where the people might

slake their thirst after the miraculous meal. Then again it may be that the marvel which was wrought in the place fixed the grass of that landscape in the apostles' memories. The spot where the green grass grew in abundance was the spot on which the five thousand were fed with the multiplied loaves and fishes. It might be too that our Lord who had looked with pity on the hungry crowds wished to comfort their bodies, wearied like wandering sheep, following Him, their Shepherd. Did the apostles record this patch of green because it was there Jesus with thoughtful kindness told them to have the people sit down? It might very well be. Jesus taught lessons from the grass of the field where He wished you to learn how the Providence of God watches over you. He looked above His head to the wayward birds of the air and down beneath His feet to the grass of the field. God watches over high and low, over birds and grass. The spar-

row does not fall except God permits it, and look how God adorns the grass of the field which to-day is and to-morrow is not! God showers splendid favors in abundance upon the least of His creatures. In the Old Testament as well as the New the grass of the field is looked upon as the type of all that is weak and perishing. "All flesh is grass and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field. The grass is withered and the flower is fallen." That is the sad lament of Isaias, and St. James at the end of the New Testament teaches to the rich the lesson of humility from the same grass. "The sun rose with a burning heat and parched the grass, and the flower thereof fell off, and the beauty of the shape thereof perished; so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." Our Lord, however, in His kindness drew more consoling lessons from the grass of the field. Look, He tells you, at the most insignificant of the things

which God has made. You may be like the green grass because your life is lowly, because your life is brief, because you will soon wither away and cease to be, but be not of little faith, God cares and God watches over you.

Whenever you look at the grass on the ground, you should recall the multiplication of the loaves; you should recall the watchful care of the Father. You cannot know the rich, sudden growth of Eastern vegetation and its equally sudden withering, but you have seen the blades green in the showers of spring and burnt brown in the pitiless glare of the parching summer, and both seasons will teach you Christ's lesson and bring back to your minds Christ's marvelous kindness. He looks with pity on you now and He still blesses for you and multiplies a still more marvelous bread. All flesh of man is grass, but the flesh of the Son of Man is meat indeed and He that eateth of It shall not perish forever.

*REEDS*

Jesus had reason to remember the reeds of His native land. It was said of His gentleness that the bruised reed He would not break. He would be tender with it and care for it as His Father cared for the grass. But how did the reed treat Jesus? The reed turned upon its kind benefactor and bruised Him. The reed of the East is no fragile, weak thing such as you see growing in the swamps or by the side of streams. The Eastern reed grows to a great height and its stem, though hollow and brittle, is hard and may deal a severe blow. The reed in the hand of a cruel soldier struck the crowned head of Jesus and drove the points of the thorns deeper into His flesh. The reed played the part of a king's sceptre and brought ridicule upon Jesus, mocking Him who was the only true King of the Jews. The reed lifted up a sponge filled with gall and pressed it

to the lips of the dying Jesus. The reed took strange ways of being grateful to Him who would not break it when bruised.

Our Lord knew the character of the reed and despised its character. He would be merciful to its bruises; He would despise its weakness. If you are to be of those whom Jesus would praise, you must not be a reed. When Jesus praised John the Baptist, He declared that John was no reed. "What went you out to see? A reed shaken by the wind?" The Jews would find the banks of the Jordan lined with tall reeds, waving their silken tassels high up in the air. The Jews would see the lightest breath of air sway the tall, thin canes and would see them driven flat to the ground before the blasts of the wind. But on the banks of the Jordan the Jews would not find John the Baptist like a reed. The Baptist grew up in the dry, rock soil of the desert. He had the stoutness of hardy soil and

rigid training. He was not the plant of the marsh, the growth of one warm season. No breeze could sway the tough fibres of the desert tree; no gale could bring its branches low. Herod might lop that noble body; he would never frighten John's undaunted soul or sway it a hair's breadth from the line of duty and right principles.

The reed is the type of unstable characters; it is the type of ungrateful characters. What does Christ from His tabernacle look out to see? Reeds shaken by the wind; reeds bruised; reeds mocking Him, reeds striking the thorn deeper into His head or pressing the bitter potion to His lips? Jesus has pitied your poor bruised souls in His mercy when in His justice He might have crushed them. And have you been a mockery to your benefactor? Will the King of the Altar find in you the hollow symbol of Kingship, a yielding reed, or rather a mace of gold which becomes the hand of the King of

Kings? When you come to touch Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, will there be drippings of gall there instead of the honey sweetness of a virtuous soul? What does Jesus look out to see? Reeds or other forerunners like John, the Baptist?

### *THORNS*

If reeds have a bad reputation in Scripture, thorns have a worse reputation. Thorns are useless; thorns are destructive; thorns are fit only for the flames. "Beware of the false prophets," cries Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. "By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" You must be good to do good. If you are vines you will produce grapes; if you are thorns, you will grow the deadly thorn and will be cut down and cast into the fire. You are in that case false prophets, professing Christ but practising what is against Christ. Thorns are un-

fruitful of good, but, worse still, they are destructive of good in others. "He that receiveth the seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word and he becometh fruitless." You would have to be farmers and farmers in Palestine to understand fully the teaching of our Lord in this place. When He uttered those words, He could point to the wheat-field right before the eyes of His hearers and show how the matted thorns by their rank, rapid growth had entirely choked the blades of wheat and the golden grain and the future bread. Jesus looks from those fields into the soil of your hearts where He is ever sowing good seed, and He fears and sorrows as He thinks of the fate of His seed. The cares of life outnumber His seed; the cares of life grow faster than Christ's seed. Loves, hates, desires, hunger and thirst, rivalry, anxieties, fears, these are the sharp thorns

which grow thickly in the heart. The word which Jesus sows must struggle hard to grow up to the golden wheat. It is folly to look for grapes on thorns; it is a miracle to find God's wheat among the world's thorns.

Thorns played a more deadly game. Thorns wind themselves around the good grain in your hearts; thorns wind themselves around your Savior's head, and Jesus would rather the thorns be on His head than in your hearts. Indeed Jesus permitted the sharp points to press into His flesh that He might blunt their points and check their growth in your flesh. Men do not, it is true, gather grapes from thorns, but the cruel hands which wove that piercing crown came nearest of all men to finding grapes on thorns. Those indeed were thorns whose points were red with the wine of Christ's blood; those were thorns under whose pressure the grapes of Redemption spurted out the vintage of God's justice.

Oh, thorns surely deserve the flames! Are you growing any thorns? Jesus here in the Blessed Sacrament is eager to shed the sweet and warming wine of His blood within your souls, but let it not be a vain shedding. Cares of life you must have, because you must live; but cares must not become thorns. Cares of life must not multiply to the exclusion of the cares of God. Cares of life must not sharpen into worries that sting and wound, and, in centering attention on their pangs, sway the thoughts from God. Your hearts will hearken to St. Paul. "The earth," he says, "that drinketh in the rain which cometh often upon it and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it was tilled, receiveth blessing from God. But that which bringeth forth thorns and briers is reprobate and very near unto a curse, whose end is to be burnt. But, my dearly beloved, we trust better things of you and nearer to salva-

tion. For God is not unjust that He should forget your work."

## PRAYER

*MOST bountiful Jesus, Lord of the earth and all that it produces, thou who hast given to mankind through the grain of the wheat and the juice of the grape the most precious of all gifts, help us, ungrateful sinners, to put to such use the numberless creatures of thy bounty that our souls be made holy and thy name be hallowed by every growth of field and woodland.*

## FOXES, DOGS AND SWINE

### *FOXES*

MANY a man will not hesitate to apply to another the first word of abuse that may be uppermost in his mind, and many a man is right perhaps once in a thousand times. Christ as God had God's infinite wisdom, and as man had as much of that wisdom as the designs of the Incarnation and Redemption permitted. Knowledge is sparing in abuse where ignorance and hatred is lavish in it. It will surprise you to hear our Lord call Herod a fox, but you will be certain that no mistake was made in so calling Herod, and you will be certain it was a virtuous and necessary act to call him a fox. History tells that Herod's cunning and duplicity, Herod's selfish knavery and dark

cowardly ways, deservedly earned for him the title of fox. The fox, you see, had no better name among the farmers of Palestine then than it has to-day. Jesus put Herod low down among men in giving him the name of fox. Jesus put Himself even lower when He declared that in one respect He was worse off than the fox. Bad as the fox was, it had a place it might call home, a hole in the ground where it could hide and take its rest, but Jesus had no home, no place to lay His head. Why did Jesus declare Himself worse than the fox? He wished to test the sincerity of one who cried, "Master, I will follow whithersoever you shall go." "I have no place to go," said Jesus in reply. "If you will follow me, you may not have even a hole in the ground to creep into. Are you ready to live worse than the foxes? Then, come and follow me." Did such a dismal prospect frighten away the man who made so generous an offer? We hope

and pray it did not. If he followed Christ, He found, as you will find, that the following of Christ is a source of true content even when board and lodging are very uncertain. Assuredly you often think of what our Lord said of the foxes when you look at His dark and narrow home on the altar. Into that darkness Jesus must often retire. Far more does He prefer to be out of those restricted quarters, to be lifted aloft for your adoration, to move through the air bringing you a blessing or to be passed over the altar-rail to the tongues and hearts of His followers. Yet for long intervals Jesus is hidden in darkness; for short intervals only does He move in the light. Into the shadows, however, your prayers, your love, your wishes, your thanks and your regrets go from your warm, believing and loving hearts and not a single feeling is lost or strays in that obscure recess. Your heart's fondest wish and your mind's most fleeting

thought find their way to where Jesus lays His head upon the altar. In His mortal life Jesus laid His head anywhere that His search for souls led Him; on the sands of the desert, upon the mountain-top by night, upon the hard plank of the tossing boat, upon the rough wood of the cross. In His Eucharistic life Jesus is equally apostolic in following the ways of men, and wherever man may be in the mountain or in the valley, on sea or land, there will be Jesus in the dark shadows of His little home.

If you think of the haunts of foxes, when you look at the tabernacle, ah, what will you say of the millions of other places where Jesus must lay His head? Did He think of the hearts of men when He spoke of the foxes and their holes in the ground? Did He think of going into the hearts of men to lay His head? The fox may make a nest in the rocks or burrow deep into the clay, but Jesus has harder, colder,

darker spots to travel to and to rest in than the fox. The fox will not run to its enemy, but Jesus will. The fox will not stay where everything is repugnant to it, but Jesus will. The hearts of mankind—alas even your hearts—are sometimes worse than a hole in the ground and yet Jesus goes there and abides there and there lays down His head to take a rest.

### *DOGS*

Dogs were not among the Jews made the pets and companions of man as they are in modern times. Dogs were the scavengers and lived on the refuse of the village. It was the last indignity offered to the unholy Jezabel that her body was mangled by dogs. "Am I a dog?" asked Goliath in rage when David came against Him with a staff. When our Lord would picture to us the utter misery of Lazarus, He tells us that as he lay at the gate, the dogs came and licked his sores. Whether

Lazarus was too helpless to drive them away or whether they alone showed him pitiable kindness in acting as they did, in either case Lazarus was in the lowest state of degradation. Sinners of the most guilty type are called dogs by St. John at the end of his Apocalypse. In heaven are the blessed that have washed their robes in the blood of the lamb. They "have a right to the tree of life and may enter in by the gates into the city." Then John gives a list of those who are outside of the heavenly city. "Without are dogs and sorcerers and unchaste and murderers and servers of idols and everyone that loveth and maketh a lie." The first among those that have not washed their robes in the blood of the lamb are dogs. Dogs have become in the Church the type of all unworthy communicants. "The bread of the Lord is not to be given to dogs," sings St. Thomas in his hymn for Corpus Christi. There is only one thing which puts a com-

municant in that unworthy class,—that thing is unrepented mortal sin. You have never approached Jesus with a soul unwashed by the blood of the lamb. You will never do so, but your love and devotion should be all the greater if even one unworthy Communion had been made since first Jesus became our bread. You will not sit unmindful at your banquet like another Dives if your Lord and Savior is the Lazarus to whose wounds the roving dogs have touched their tongues.

The term dog is more offensive than fox. A man might find some credit in being called a fox; he would be fiercely indignant if he were called a dog. To this day the Mohammedans call the Christians dogs. That is perhaps the most opprobrious title the infidel can bestow. Consider all this and then think of the time when Jesus applied the word, indirectly, at least, to a woman who has come down the ages as the heroine of persevering prayer. No one

had more discouragement than she, but she triumphed over all difficulties. She was a gentle woman of Chanaan and came crying after Jesus. To her first cry for help our Lord answered not a word. The snub of His silence did not stop her. Then the apostles turned on her. "Send her away," they said. The opposition of the apostles did not restrain her. Then our Lord expressed a refusal. "I give favors only to the Jews; I am sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The refusal was of no avail against her. She followed Jesus into a house where He hid from her. She found Him and adored Him, still crying, "Lord help me." To refusal was now added what seemed insult. "It is not good, said the Lord, to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs." The Syrophenician woman was a dog! Cruel, harsh words! Surely this woman will now cease praying. Ah, no! If Jesus was apparently severe,

He knew the heart before Him could bear that severity. Her prayer rose triumphant over all obstacles. She would be a dog; she would not ask for bread; she would lap up the crumbs which fell from the table, because she was a mother and had a mother's heart full to breaking with a mother's love, because she had a daughter sick at home and what mattered it to her that she were the sorriest beast ever chased from a door-way if only she had one desire satisfied, if only Jesus would cure her child. Ah, Jesus saw that mother's heart from first to last, and He gave to her her heart's desire and crowned her with glory for all time. "O woman, great is thy faith; be it done to thee as thou wilt." What do you say to that wonderful story? You have not to fight your way to the side of Jesus against rebuffs and opposition and insult. You have not been forced to cry out ceaselessly. You are of the sheep of the Good Shepherd. To you has

not been let fall a crumb from the table, but before you has been spread a banquet above all banquets, the Bread of the Lord Himself. Yet after all this bounty freely given, what is the judgment of Jesus upon you? Does He say to you? "My children, great is your faith?"

*SWINE*

Lower than foxes, lower than dogs in the estimation of the Jews were swine. Swine were unclean animals which the Jews were forbidden to eat, which the Machabees would not touch though they knew they were to die for their refusal. Our Lord coupled dogs and swine together in the passage, part of whose vigorous teaching has passed into the language of the world: "Give not that which is holy to dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine." Once in His life Jesus had something to offer to swine. He could not bestow a more fatal gift, and no doubt His

followers considered He could find no more fit recipient for the gift. Jesus was about to drive out from a possessed man the many devils who called themselves a legion and at their request and His command the unclean spirits passed into the unclean animals and both rushed madly into the engulfing waters of the sea. Behold how clear is the teaching of Jesus: "Cast not pearls before swine." Yet, let us say it with all the reverence due to His boundless love, who has been the one that has been the greatest offender against this law of prudence? Is it not Jesus Himself? He had no pearl of greater price than Himself and with lavish, spendthrift hands He threw Himself broadcast along the ways of life and before all manner of men. Who will say that Jesus did not know that He was casting the precious pearl of His body and blood before souls far more unclean than the uncleanest animal? You will tell Jesus that in your

case no mortal sin will render you unfit for His priceless jewel and that your faithfulness will atone for many another into whom has passed the evil spirit, the legion, perhaps, which hurried the swine of the Gerasenes to destruction.

The Gospels, however, give you a more encouraging thought about swine than the one you have just been considering, where they are spurning pearls and rushing seaward. Yet this new picture is not as much in itself consoling as it is in the outcome. When our Lord wished to tell you that the Prodigal Son had fallen to the lowest depths of degradation, where did Jesus describe that the Prodigal was? The Prodigal was in a pig-sty and gazing with an envious eye on the pig-trough. "He sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat." If the swine was unclean to the taste, what would the hearers of

Jesus think of the state of the Prodigal? The Prodigal would not merely touch swine; he wanted to be one with the swine and fight for a place at the trough. Dark, black picture indeed! But the gloom of the night is deepest then when the day is about to dawn in the east. When the Prodigal had gone as low as the trough of the swine, his thoughts leaped back at once from darkness to daylight. He came to himself. "I longed for a few husks; the servants of my father have plenty of bread. I am in a pig-sty and I might be in my father's house. I am tempted to bend to a trough when I might be seated at a table. I will rise up and go to my father's house." There in that picture and in that meditation and in that resolution you have the reason why Jesus threw His pearls before the world. His merciful Heart could not bear to see any soul wandering afar, sinking into the depths of shame, sating divine appetites on dis-

gusting garbage. In the house of Jesus there is plenty of Bread, Bread of heavenly making, Bread of highest fiber, Bread too—oh, generous giver—for the lowest of His servants, for the most ungrateful children, the most dissipated of wanderers, the most degraded of fallen sinners, the worst and most foul of Prodigals. You have not been such. You come frequently, daily even, to partake of the Bread. But do you forget the many who still wander? Be glad when they come back. Do not receive them with the black looks of a jealous elder brother; but welcome them with joy and merry-making. "Thy brother was dead and is come to life again; he was lost and is found." The swine have disgorged a pearl, purchased by Jesus at a great price.

## PRAYER

*MERCIFUL and gracious Father, who hast given to us the many creatures of the world to administer to our every comfort, grant, we earnestly beg of thee, that by sin we do not sink below the level of the beasts but rather that by innocence we make ourselves less unworthy to eat of the Bread of thy table, and less unwilling to give frequent place in our hearts to thy presence, deserving thus through thy favor to be welcomed to the banquet of our eternal home.*

## BIRTH, MARRIAGE AND DEATH

### *BIRTH*

WHEN you celebrate your birthdays, do you think ever of your mothers, of their fears for you, of the hours of maternal martyrdom, of the anguish which God has permitted to be connected with the birth of every human being? Most likely you prefer to recall the happiness of your mothers after your birth. Your coming was a bright, warm sun which made all threatening clouds disappear and left the sky full of sparkling joy. Yet the first exultation of motherhood which met you at your birth and which grew with your growth, should not make you forget or be less grateful for the pangs which were the price of your birthday. Every birth must be paid for by pain,

Is that principle true also of the birth of which Jesus speaks, the birth which is said to be, "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God"? Must the soul endure pangs if it is to be born again of Christ? Yes, sacrifice attends every moment of the spiritual life and sacrifice is not absent from the first moment. The souls of children which have no sin except what was put there by their first parent, Adam, suffer no pain on relinquishing that sin in Baptism. It is not fair that they should suffer where they have not actually sinned. But all other souls that have actually sinned, must sacrifice and suffer to be born again from darkness to light. The remorse which follows a fault, the bitterness of regret, the heart-chill of dissatisfaction, the humiliation of knowing our petty meanness, the cold, black ashes left after the fire of passion, these are some of the pangs of spiritual birth. Then again, if the soul

should still cling to what is unlawful, it cannot be born again to grace unless it breaks the bond of that unhallowed affection. The flesh may wince, the beast may still be restless, but the master-will resolves to abandon favorite haunts, rend unholy ties, relinquish sinful indulgence, uproot evil habits. Here you have a host of pains which surround your birth to God. Your souls' birthdays are all the more joyous because like the birthdays of your body they were accompanied by pain. In most cases it is before the Blessed Sacrament that you are born again to Christ. Before His altar you grieve for your sins; facing His tabernacle you resolve to enter upon a new life; at His altar-rail you celebrate the happiness of your souls' birthday by the reception of Communion.

Birth, however, means more than pain and more than the long joy which follows pain. Birth is the beginning of a new life. You see in birth another

being come into existence and exercise newborn faculties in new practices. No matter how often the experience has happened before, you find always something attractive and fascinating in the first looks and first movements and first words of a child. A small portion of the earth's substance it is, in weight about ten pounds and it has been filled with life. An eye which in death and decay would pass into a few grains of dust, is fashioned into a wonderful instrument, flashes with brightness and color and is dimmed with sorrow or is resplendent with laughing joy. What a chasm between a heap of dust and a living eye! That chasm is spanned by life and birth. The same astounding truth is exemplified in every one of man's organs, in tongue and ear, in heart and brain. The soul transforms matter into man, gives life to lifelessness and then by birth gives free exercise to a host of wonderful powers.

If it is a marvel that dust should see and speak, it is a still greater marvel that the soul of man should be born again. Nicodemus was astonished that one who is old should have to begin life again as an infant, when Jesus told him, "unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." He ought to have been much more astonished at the truth which Jesus was then explaining. The birth of man to the Kingdom of God gives to body and soul far more startling powers than man's birth to life. The process of human birth equips matter with faculties of sight and speech and imagination, but the process of divine birth lifts the soul to surpassingly higher powers. That soul born again has been made a child of God, has put on a likeness to God, has won the right to inherit God, and has now the miraculous, the tremendous ability to behold, to enjoy and to possess God forever. The eye of a picture cannot see; the lips of a statue cannot

speak. However perfect the works of art may be; however life-like they may appear, they cannot exercise the powers of life, because paint and marble are not living and they are separated widely from life. But the chasm between your soul and the sight of God, between your bodies and the glory they will have when risen, is infinitely wider. Only God's power can span that distance and give you now a new birth to the life of grace. Every new coming of grace and every increase of grace means a fuller possession of new and wonderful faculties. Even one Communion here and now, bringing to you the precious gift of grace, will have an effect in heaven and for eternity. Light is at this moment leaving some star in the sky and that ray will not be seen for years, but some day your eyes or the eyes of others will respond to that ray and enjoy its brightness. So every act of love and worship of the Blessed Sacrament imparts to your souls a new

splendor which will light up your minds and wills for eternity, flood with its effulgence your risen bodies and unfold to you in clearer brilliancy the entrancing vision of the most High.

### *MARRIAGE*

Marriage is the duty of most men and women. Without the home the world would not continue; all government would cease and the Church would no longer exist. Marriage makes the home. It was to be expected that Jesus would bless the home and the state of marriage, and He did so generously. Jesus might have come to earth, as He will come to judgment, carried in the clouds of glory. He need not have entered into a home and by His presence sanctified the marriage of Mary and Joseph. It is true that Jesus had no earthly father. It is true that He Himself did not enter the marriage state and invited, although he

did not command, others, especially His apostles and priests, to follow Him in His life of virginity. Yet despite all this the acts and teaching of His life show how highly he appreciated marriage and the home. His first miracle was wrought at a wedding for the sake of a newly-married couple. His whole life might be compared to a marriage feast because He Himself said that He was like a bridegroom and that His followers would rejoice while He was with them in life. Jesus was fond of taking the marriage feast as the source of His parables and teachings. The wise and foolish virgins were bridesmaids. The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a King who made a marriage for his son. His apostles following the example of their Master showed a like esteem of the sacredness of marriage. St. Paul likens the union between Christ and the Church to marriage. St. John in the Apocalypse

calls Heaven and its unending joys "the marriage supper of the Lamb," "the great supper of God."

All these actions and words of Christ and His apostles which show the holiness of the marriage state, have all been associated in the teaching of the Church with the Blessed Sacrament. The changing of water into wine at Cana was the promise and pledge of the greater change of wine into the blood of Jesus. The marriage feasts described by Jesus have been taken as types of the feast of the altar, and the need of preparations for Communion has been taught from the parable of the man who came to the banquet without the wedding garb. If heaven, too, is the great supper of God, Communion with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is its foretaste upon earth. In the spirit of such teaching the Church desires to bring marriage in close touch with the Blessed Sacrament. Mass and Communion should precede every marriage

and on the bridal day the Church brings the bride and bridegroom close to the altar. The recent decrees of the Pope on frequent Communion makes special mention of married persons and invites them to receive often of the Holy Table, allowing no impediment beyond mortal sin and unworthy motives and making the married no exception to the general law.

It is from the altar that you and your children will gain God's help to think of Christian marriage as Christ did and keep it sacred from the monstrous notions entertained of marriage outside the Catholic Church and beyond the range of the Blessed Sacrament. The holy and sublime union between Christ and His Church, as has been said, is likened by St. Paul to the union of marriage. Christ is the bridegroom and His Church is the spouse. The Bible used to be sacred with all Christians, but now many who call themselves Christians, reject all divine reve-

lation or distort its teachings. What will become of Christian marriage, that picture of the union of Christ and His Church? The prospect is truly appalling. The bond once permanent is broken for a thousand and one pretexts. Divorce is rampant, especially in America. The most extravagant and dangerous theories about marriage are propounded and discussed with shameless freedom in books and in the daily press. The most sacred duties of matrimony are despised and ridiculed. Where once a modest reticence veiled the union of father and mother, now an unblushing frankness discusses and debates everything unreservedly even before the young and innocent. Where is this to end? No one knows. You must then draw nearer to the Blessed Sacrament which will give you grace to remain or become good fathers and good mothers. You must be better Catholics by frequent Communion, and in practice and in

opinion you must defend the Christian and Catholic ideal of marriage, the loving union of husband and wife, the unending wedlock of father and mother, the fountain head and guardian of the Christian home, the hallowed type of the heavenly espousals of Christ and His Church.

### *DEATH*

Birth is followed sooner or later by death. That is the shadow which falls on the cradle and goes on deepening as life advances. Man is always walking in the valley of the shadow of death. He speeds with the swiftness of a train into the dark future and he knows that no matter how expert the care, how elaborate the precautions, how solid the assurance of a safe journey, he will somewhere in the black night before him be wrecked and doomed. The spectre of death looms up before every mortal. It is the cold grasp of that thought which is ever ready to grip the

warm, beating heart and chill it with apprehension. Jesus has let some light into the gloom. Jesus conquered death. At His word the tomb opened and the dead arose. He made us glimpse the sunrise of Easter through the lurid twilight of Calvary. He established the warmth of hope in your chilled hearts. He left Himself with you to comfort and encourage you against the uncertainty and terrors of the tomb. Jesus came to die, offered Himself willingly to die, hastened eagerly to His death, and yet as He was like us in all things, sin excepted, He trembled and grew gloomy as His hour approached. His soul became sorrowful even unto death. It was at that time when He was about to enter the thick shadows of the valley of His most horrible death, that He gave to you the promised bread of life. The Blessed Sacrament was Christ's last will and testament, His death-bed gift to mankind which is always dying. It was

His will that His Last Supper should be your last supper. His own body was His viaticum, and it will be yours. Your hearts cling in love to the Blessed Sacrament now because it will be your friend at the last hour.

Yet why should death have such terrors for you? Death is not the end; it is the beginning. Why should life be looked as a day darkening to twilight and not rather as a night whitening to dawn? Jesus would not for our sake lighten in the least His burden of sorrow and pain by allowing the joy of the Resurrection to solace His soul in His agony. But you need not do that; you ought not. Jesus destroyed death. He came that you should have life and more abundantly. The blind instincts of the body may shrink and draw back from the open grave because the poor body will have to die and decay and go back to its dust for many years before it has its resurrection. But the soul sees with the keen vision of hope, and

the soul is made courageous with the boldness of faith, and the soul should rise in serene peace above all the little fears of flesh and blood.

The tabernacle is the home of hope and courage against death. "I am the bread of life. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." Feed your souls on that bread and you will steel yourselves against the terrors of death. If your warm blood faints at the chill of death, revive it with that food. If your limbs shrink from the icy rigidity of the tomb, tell them that the undying strength of your souls will give back to every member its grace and movement by the power of the living bread. If your ruddy flesh shudders and trembles at the unsightliness of decay and the utter dissolution of dust, then do you, strong with the strength of the living Jesus, bid the weak body have no fear. Corruption will pass into comeliness and

the black dust will gather again into the splendor of glory. If every moment your bodies are dying, your souls are every moment increasing in life. Every Communion repairs the ravages of time upon you by clothing your souls in fairer beauty and with immortal vigor. If nature is dying, thanks to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, grace is ever living.

PRAYER

*JESUS, the way, the truth and the life, be with us all our days, as we come into the world, assume the world's duties and then pass once more beyond this world, and to make us serene with innocence and hope against the weakness and corruption of our bodies, constantly feed our immortal souls with the vivifying sweetness of thy living bread.*

## FOUNDATION, DOOR AND HOUSE-TOP

### *FOUNDATION*

SINCERITY is proved by trial not by protestations. "Why call you me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" asks Jesus. Such cries of piety may be warm in their utterance. They may ring with a momentary earnestness but the earnestness passes with the passing of the sounds. The sparks struck from the coldest and hardest flint are very hot and will burn intensely for an instant, but then they are no more. Jesus looked for no mere words. His service was one of deeds, and the one who gave such service, Jesus likened to "a man building a house who digged deep and laid the foundation upon a rock." What will reveal

to all whether you are building on a rock? Will it be the ornaments you put upon the house? Will it be the paint, the carving, the mere external beauty? All that is good if the house will last. All is in vain if your house is on the sands. The castles in the clouds are gorgeous and brilliant, but their foundations are in the light air and the passing sunlight. Cloud palaces collapse in a second. What of your prayers and songs and sighs before Christ in the Blessed Sacrament? Nowhere more than in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament do you find greater beauty of flower and ornamentation, nowhere such fragrant and variegated blossoms. Behold the carved and shining marble, the blaze of lights on gleaming candelabra, the preciousness of gold, silver and jewels. These you give to the Blessed Sacrament and you do well. The riches of nature and the glories of art are there not devoted to the idle gratification of vanity.

Give all that to Jesus and more, but do not stop there. Sing but be sincere. Pray but do not forget to practise. Vest the altars with beauty but do you "wear the white flower of a blameless life." Let goodness of living go with the gold of your giving. Jesus wishes His Church to last forever, and He built it upon a rock that the gates of hell might not prevail against it. If you too will last and withstand the gates of hell, say indeed, "Lord, Lord," with all the fervor you can; sing, "Lord, Lord," with glistening eyes and thrilling voice and heart of fire, but add to all that the quiet persistency of good deeds. A foundation is not seen, it is not heard, but it is always doing its work of safeguarding the building. Show that you have built solidly your devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament by living a life of virtue, which may be hidden and silent but will be the test of your sincerity and the proof that you are persevering with Jesus.

But what is this rock whose existence is revealed by good deeds? What is the foundation upon which you should build? St. Paul tells you: "Other foundation no man can lay but that which is laid: which is Christ Jesus." Jesus is the foundation upon which you must build because Jesus is above all the "author and finisher of our faith." In the Blessed Sacrament you have a cluster of wonders which bid you rest firmly on Christ. Sometimes in your thoughts the idea of the Real Presence comes home to you with a startling clearness which is overwhelming. Commonly the words you apply to Communion and Mass have become less striking from constant usage. But imagine how amazing were the truths about the Blessed Sacrament when first expressed. Put yourself in the place of the apostles when they sat at supper, and Jesus took the bread they had eaten all their life and by blessing it and uttering four

words made that Bread into His own Body. That was a test for their faith. They however had the living Jesus before them to help their faith. In Him they believed and in Him they felt secure. Should some one stop you and suddenly ask you, after Communion, "Have you just eaten the Lord Jesus Christ? Is a piece of bread inside of you God Almighty?" you would certainly be startled. If the news came that your father, mother or relative, who had died years ago, had suddenly entered the next room, you would not take it as a matter of course, as you perhaps do, when you think that God has just come upon the altar. Some day the immensity of the marvels in the Blessed Sacrament may bewilder and almost numb you with their tremendous demands on your belief. Then you will have to rest with all the strength of your soul on the foundation, which is Christ Jesus. Jesus is God; Jesus is the author of the Blessed Sacrament;

Jesus gives you His Word for the wonderful truths. You are dazed; you cannot see or realize such stupendous facts. You need not realize them; indeed it is impossible to do so, but your faith will withstand the sweep of that violent flood of wonder because you have built your faith upon the foundation, which is Christ Jesus.

### *DOOR*

The door of home awakens sad or happy memories for all of you. The door marks where the world begins and the home ends. On your return from a long absence you were glad to see the door of home opening. On your departure to work or vacation the last sight of the door filled you with a momentary regret. It may have been the lot of some of you to have been forced to leave father and mother and family forever, and perhaps the sad echoes of the closing door still jar your ears with aching memories. Oh, indeed the old

home-door means much by its opening and closing! When you knocked upon it, you looked to greet the smile of a loved one, or may be you recall the day that the voice and welcome were not the ones you hoped for. At the door you shook hands with friends when you went forth to life and its duties, rarely or perhaps never again to recross that threshold.

There are serious thoughts clustering around the doors of your homes, but note that the thoughts around another door, the door of your hearts, are more serious still, serious with the responsibilities of time, serious with the destiny of eternity. Your hearts must open to Jesus here or they will not hereafter open the door which leads to Jesus in heaven. "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man shall hear my voice and open to me the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me." What could be more gracious than that! Are you lis-

tening in the home of your heart? Don't you hear the knock? You speak of the tabernacle as the home of Jesus but you would do better to call it His temporary resting-place. Jesus does not come to the tabernacle to abide there as in His home. The home of Jesus is your heart. Listen then and you will hear Him say, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." You would know the knock of mother or father, of husband or wife, of child or friend. Do you not hear the insistent, repeated knocking of Jesus? What is your answer to Jesus? The closed door or the open door?

Alas, if you will not open to Jesus when He comes to your door, Jesus will not open to you when you come to His door. The parable of the wise and the foolish virgins is a sad story and the saddest fact in it is the door forever closed. Remember it was a joyous day, the day of a wedding. The bridesmaids were chosen so carefully.

They were friends of the bride and bridegroom. They looked forward for a long time to the wedding-day. They had made great preparations. If anything had been overlooked, it would be possible, some thought, while they were waiting, to hurry away and get what was needed. You know the disappointing issue. While some of the bridesmaids were away, the bride and bridegroom came, entered into their home and the door was closed. If you have ringing in your ears and echoes of your own home door closed on you in sadness or, God forbid, in anger, then you will be able to realize what jarring sounds reverberate forever in the ears of those who stand outside the closed door of heaven and knock forever in vain.

Lord, did you not say, "Knock and it will be opened to you"? Are they not your own bridesmaids? Did you not invite them? What is the answer of Jesus to our protests and to their

petitions. He declares that He does not know the very ones He chose. It was not enough that He should choose them; they must choose Him. They knew all the conditions upon which they were chosen. They were able easily, only too easily, to fulfill the conditions. It was not much that was asked of them. Only a little prudence. They did not look ahead. They are now knocking in vain at the closed door, and Jesus does not know them. His invitation was a knock at their hearts. Imprudence closed the door of their hearts. Had Jesus come to them, their light had never faded or gone out. Had the door of their hearts been open to Jesus, the door of the Heart of Jesus would be open to them forever. Open the door of the tabernacle and let Jesus enter your hearts, if you wish to have Jesus open the door of heaven and let you into His Heart.

*HOUSE-TOP*

The house-top was for eastern people something like a park. The Jews walked and talked, slept and prayed on the house-tops. It was on the house-top St. Peter received the vision from heaven which directed him to open the Christian Church to all people, whether Jews or Gentiles. "In very deed," said St. Peter, "I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons. But in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh justice, is acceptable to Him." To the roof and pinnacle of the temple Satan brought Jesus. There the evil one strove to induce our Lord to cast Himself down, presuming on the power of God to work a miracle for Him. Jesus spurned this suggestion of spiritual pride and quoted the Scripture: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Many a time Jesus is lifted up before you to be adored and to give you His blessing. Devotion to the Sacred

Heart and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament have brought our Lord more and more out of the tabernacle and set Him aloft, as it were, on the house-top. At Benediction and where there is temporary or perpetual adoration you see Jesus throned amidst flowers and lights and incense, and you may be sure that He is there praying for you, as no doubt He often did on the house-top of His first home in Nazareth, where, like Peter, He had visions of all races coming to His Eucharistic banquet. You may be sure too that in ciborium or monstrance He is interceding for you in your temptations when He recalls His own victorious combat with Satan. Jesus on the pinnacle of the altar is your guarantee that He will "make issue with the temptation that you be not tried beyond your strength."

Jesus, however, did not come in the Blessed Sacrament simply to be seen and to be adored, and then go down again from on high to His tabernacle

home. Jesus sends to you His blessing and His prayers, but He wishes more than all to go out in person to your hearts. The house-tops of Palestine were the places from which public proclamations were made to the people. From the house-top the ruler proclaimed his commands to the people. What the press is today, the chief agent of publicity, that the house-top of Palestine was in a small way. So when our Lord desired His teachings to go abroad, He declared to His apostles: "That which I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light and that which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the house-tops." Jesus did not want His doctrine hidden in the dark. Jesus became bread that he might come to you. In the Blessed Sacrament Jesus walks not except through you; He talks not except through you. He is dumb; He is helpless unless you give Him voice and proclaim His presence by your reception of Him. Sometimes

indeed Jesus goes abroad when the priest brings Him to the sick, but even there He is really hidden until He is revealed and declared through the sick who partake of His Body.

Whenever you go from the Communion rail, blessed with the most precious of God's gifts, then you are preaching from the house-top Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The sacred memory of the morning's Communion, the patient word, the kind deed, the checked murmur, the cheerful welcoming of duties and trials, the suppressing of all evil gossip and fault finding, the thousand and one other thoughts and acts, which are inspired by the presence of Jesus within you, are all so many sermons by which you are preaching Jesus from the house-top. Jesus is no longer dumb because He is speaking eloquently on your charitable lips. Jesus is no longer blind because He looks lovingly through your meek and patient glances. Jesus is not crippled

or maimed because in your limbs He runs to virtuous deeds; by your hands He reaches out in numberless kind ways to His brethren and yours. "That which I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light." Jesus seemed to have hidden Himself in a cloud when He passed your lips to be your food, but no, the light of Jesus shines through you, transfiguring you with the brightness of His presence and the glory of His grace and radiating His splendor to all mankind through the virtues you perform because of His body and blood. You are the house-tops from which Jesus preaches to the world.

PRAYER

*LORD JESUS, author and finisher of our faith, who art ever knocking at the door of our hearts and hast exhorted us to proclaim thy teachings from the house-tops, grant, we humbly ask of thee, that a stronger belief may*

*increase our Communions and more frequent Communions may strengthen our belief and that, welcoming thee from the open door of thy tabernacle, we may bear thee abroad and everywhere in the many virtues which thy sacramental presence bestows upon us for our exercise in time and for our exaltation throughout eternity.*

## PLOW, OXEN AND YOKE

### *PLOW*

IT is not unlikely that Jesus may have managed a plow. He was, it is true, a carpenter, but He may have cultivated a small plot of ground for the wants of His mother. At any rate He knew how to plow if He had found it necessary. You recall what Jesus said to one of His followers who seemed to be wavering in loyalty. "No man putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." "Put your hand to the plow and look ahead," these are the brief and sufficient directions which Christ our Lord gives for plowing. A strong hand and a firm grip is needed to keep the point of the plow down in the soil. Tough sod, hard clay or rocky earth are difficult things to go through and weary

the straining hands. Then too you must look ahead to avoid accidents, to keep your furrow straight and—here is the trouble for weak limbs—you must continue to look ahead until the furrow is finished, until the field is plowed. Don't drop your hand; don't look back, and you will be a good plowman, and Jesus tells you that if you do the same in God's harvest-fields you will be worthy of the kingdom of heaven. Ah, to reap God's harvest, you must break more stubborn ground than the plowman has to break. It is torturing to put one's hand to God's plow and press its point into the sensitive depths of the heart. The seed of God's sowing will not grow on beaten paths or on stones. You must soften your hearts. Pride or unbelief or stubborn clinging to your own will or persistence in what you know to be sinful, all these are the tough substance of the heart which must be broken up for the harvest.

Are you not at times likely to be discouraged with this painful work? Are you not tempted to look back and let the furrow go unfinished and relinquish your hopes of the harvest? You begin to be very devout to the Blessed Sacrament; you strive to root out your faults; your confessions are fervent and frequent; you are often at the altar-rail; you visit Jesus on the altar, perhaps many times a day and you love to bow your head to His blessing at Benediction. Yet, with all this, virtue seems no easier and sin seems to lose none of its attractions. Is your hand itching to relax its grasp on the plow? Are your eyes yearning to look back and give it all up in despair? Then recall the warning of Jesus: "He that puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy of the kingdom of God." Remember what St. Paul tells you: "He that plows, should plow in hope." No farmer expects to see the green blades of the wheat sprouting up under his

plow. He knows he must plow in hope. He cheers himself by thoughts of the ripened grain of harvest-time. He takes new courage, puts more steel into his grasp of the plow, keeps a steadier watch out ahead. When the plump grain is slipping from the heavy-headed stalks, and bag and basket are heaped to overflowing, then his hands may rest and his eyes look back contentedly upon a season of persevering labor. He plowed in hope; he is joyous in the harvest. So do not relax your efforts. Cease not your visits or confessions or Communions. Look not back to a life of ease. Do not be swayed by present difficulties. Go on in hope and by perseverance prove yourself fit for the kingdom of God.

### *OXEN*

You must not forget that the ox helped the plowman in his work. Indeed the farmer's great friend and his

highly prized possession was his ox. When our Lord wished to convict His opponents of insincerity, He showed them how they would save their ox from death or feed it or lead it to water on the Sabbath and were hypocrites to condemn him for doing good to men on the Sabbath. Yes, the ox was the treasure of the people of Palestine. Nothing will better show you that truth than the parable of the man who made a great supper. Those invited began to excuse themselves. One could not come because he had bought a farm, another because he had married a wife, and still another had bought five yoke of oxen. Five yoke of oxen must have been a great wealth when they ranked as excuses of the same value as property and wife. In that case the oxen kept their owner from the great banquet. The master of the house was angry that his invitation was treated with such scanty respect and he cried out, "I say unto you that none of those

men that were invited shall taste of my supper."

When Christ told this parable, it was at a meal given to Him by one of the Pharisees. Christ spoke in answer to one who had said: "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." There can hardly be any doubt that Jesus must have thought of the other banquets He was to offer to mankind. Heaven is likened to a banquet. For all of these Christ has sent out most earnest invitations. Christ wishes all to eat bread in the kingdom of God, and to insure all of attaining that blessing, He gave us a banquet above all banquets upon earth. Who can refuse an invitation to that banquet? In it Jesus Himself is both host and food. Yet despite the attractiveness of His wonderful table, many of those invited refuse to come. The cares of life possess them. They have bought oxen, and they wish to try them. They prefer to be with their animals rather than

with Jesus. If you are allowing anything to keep you from Christ's table, you are not putting the price you should upon the bread of the kingdom of God. The sloth to which you yield, the amusements which captivate you, the desires which enslave you, the sin you will not shake off your soul, these and the like are your oxen. You prefer to try them and be with them than at Christ's banquet.

What then are you to do? You must do as the Jews did. Sacrifice is found in all religion; sacrifice is the test of sincere love, and sacrifice of what is dear is the best expression of one's love. If their oxen were precious treasures to the Jews, and we know they were, that would be all the more reason for giving them to God. Christ found in the temple those that sold oxen. The oxen were there to be sacrificed. The very gifts of God which keep you from Him may be the means of bringing you nearer to Him. If

then anything which God has made for you, pleasure of sense or joy of soul, ease or indulgence of any kind, keeps you from God, becomes a possession which would make you neglect the invitation to the banquet of the altar, then make a sweet-smelling sacrifice of that dangerous treasure. Turn from the stable to the tabernacle, from the field to the altar. Let your oxen give you higher and more delightful places at God's banquet in heaven by not preferring them to the banquet which Jesus spreads for you here upon earth.

*YOKE*

What is it that brings the plow and oxen together and makes of them instruments for good, producers of the golden harvest? It is the yoke. The yoke is the bond, necessary for plow and oxen, binding them together in fruitful labor. You know the yoke must be borne or the furrow will not be plowed; the yoke must weigh heav-

ily and chafe or the wheat will not be reaped. Plows and oxen might be the finest ever owned, but they are useless without the yoke. Without that bond there will be no bread. Is not that a sad truth for you, a truth which disturbs and worries? A yoke, you think, means bondage; St. Paul speaks of being held under a yoke of bondage. A yoke means slavery. "Whosoever are servants under the yoke, let them count their masters worthy of all honor," writes St. Paul to Timothy. A yoke means a burden; St. Peter cried out against the Pharisees among the Christians, "Why tempt you God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?" You will no doubt wonder, if all this is so, why Jesus calls His yoke sweet and His burden light and why Jesus invites all who are sad and heavily burdened to come to Him, and for what purpose? Why, to put on that very yoke.

There is a mystery, you will say. How can a yoke be sweet? The tugging oxen and the tearing plow mean toil and suffering and every step of the weary limbs and every drive of the struggling plow presses upon the yoke to make it heavier and make it chafe very sorely. Yet with all that, the yoke of Jesus is sweet. The first reason is that you must bear some yoke. If you do not bear the yoke of innocence, you must bear the yoke of guilt. If you are not plowing the fields of virtue, you will be breaking up the furrows of vice. If you shake off the yoke of Christ, then the world, the flesh and the devil will put upon you their yokes. That is just what Jesus was teaching when He said that His yoke was sweet. The people had to choose between Jesus and the Pharisees. Both had their yokes, because religion implies a yoke, but the yoke of Jesus was sweet and the yoke of the Pharisees was galling. You find the service of God hard and

trying. You must put your hand to the plow and not look back and that is hard. You must make sacrifice of oxen and that is painful. You see vice about you laughing and dancing and rollicking and you find religion quiet and solemn and gloomy. Yet you must not forget that the yoke which vice makes for its followers is heavier than iron and more cutting than a knife. Your souls must bear some yoke and the yoke of Christ is sweetest of all.

The second reason why the yoke of Christ is sweet is that Christ is always there to help you bear it. A yoke is a bond which unites two at least and when you put upon you Christ's yoke, or rather when you let Him fit it gently on your soul, smoothing the rough edges and suiting it to your weakness, you know that He is bearing half the weight or more and that He is doing more than half the work. In prayer, you feel Jesus sharing your burden, and in all the sacraments, in the consolations

of His grace, in the consoling services of His Church, in the relief of confession and especially in the loving intercourse of Communion. The yoke is indeed sweet because your yokefellow is Christ, Christ who reaches out a helping hand in hundreds of various ways, and especially from His home on the altar.

PRAYER

*LORD JESUS, husbandman of eternal life, who in the fruitful yield of the wheat hast been so full of kindness as to bestow upon us a food beyond all price, hear us and grant to us, who are strengthened by thy body, the spirit of sacrifice and perseverance that we may manfully bear thy yoke and produce harvests of goodness a hundredfold.*

## BOTTLES, BASKETS AND CUPS

### *BOTTLES*

THE bottles in the time of our Lord were often made of skins of sheep and goats. In the course of time the leather would soften and lose its toughness by the constant moistening of the water or wine or by the bending and continual handling. Any slight pressure in excess of the bottle's capacity meant the loss of the spurting contents through parting seams. This explanation of one of our Lord's brief parables is needed for you, but His hearers would understand Him at once, when He said, "You cannot put new wine in old bottles." The Pharisees, who are the inveterate fault finders of the Gospels, had complained that Christ did not make His followers fast and mourn,

and Christ answered them as He so often did with a lesson from their own experience. Would the Pharisees put new wine, fermenting and seething and expanding into old bottles? No! They knew too much for that. They took a new bottle for their new wine if they did not wish to lose wine and bottle alike. So our Lord, kindest of teachers, imparted His teachings gradually and never taxed His followers beyond their strength. Christ knew the breaking-point of His disciples' wills. He gave them what they could stand. He would not have them lose His precious message and break down their weak resolves by any excessive pressure. The wine was just right for the bottle and the bottle just right for the wine when Christ was master of the vineyard! Later on, the apostles bore fasting and mourning and persecution and death. If the blood of martyrdom was presented to their souls, they were able for even that severest of all the

pressures which test the will of man, but earlier in their lives such wine was too fiery for their veins.

There is no greater marvel of condescension than the Blessed Sacrament. Who can imagine a more wonderful and yet more natural way in which Jesus could come to us than in food—the plainest, the most ordinary food? Indeed the very naturalness of it may be the occasion of making you forget the presence of God in the Sacred Host. Familiarity, the proverb tells us, may have serious consequences. Yet, you will promptly answer, no familiarity where there is true love can result in any lessening of esteem. You will recall your mother and will remember that in her case the closest intimacy did but increase your love and respect. No more precious contents were ever put into any vessel than Jesus put into the Blessed Sacrament. It was for your sake He put His body and blood, soul and divinity into the lowliness of

common food, transforming its substance into Himself and leaving the outward appearance of bread that to come to Him might be easy and attractive.

In another way too Jesus condescends to your weakness in the Blessed Sacrament. Sacrifice and religion have always gone together. God has always demanded service and sacrifice. The fruits of the fields and the first things of the flocks were offered to Him by the Jews. Wherever man worshipped God, he made sacrifice to the Creator of all by the destruction of something precious in His creatures. Christ did not do away with sacrifice. He perfected it. He became the last, supreme offering to God and instituted the Blessed Sacrament to repeat forever the most perfect act of sacrifice wherein God is priest and victim. You have no treasure to lose, no beloved son, no sheep or ox, no lamb or doves. Jesus has made sacrifice easy for you. He

has become your sacrifice on the altar. If your hearts had to bear the strain put upon the heart of Abraham, you would find them a thousand times weaker than old bottles filled with fermenting wine. How sweetly, how wonderfully, has Jesus made His truths fit the soul! His religion is most natural, most winning. Jesus is our sacrifice, offered every moment, and accepted every moment by God, the Father. But does He not want some sacrifice of you? He wants you to share in His sacrifice, to participate in the Mass, to partake of His body and blood, and in preparation for His coming to you He wants you to make the sacrifice of repentance and reparation. "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humble heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

*BASKETS*

One day the apostles took ship with our Lord and had only one loaf of bread

with them. Perhaps poverty, perhaps carelessness was responsible for their meagre rations. Just before embarking some Pharisees had put questions to our Lord. They put their questions as they usually did, not with the desire of learning but with the purpose of catching our Lord. Turning to His apostles, Jesus said, as the boat was going off, "Don't let the principles of the Pharisees affect you," but Jesus used other words than those. He wished to describe the secret, all-pervading, insidious force of the Pharisees' spirit, and He cried, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." The apostles thought of their single loaf and, if they had to keep away from the bakeshops of the Pharisees, what would they do? Their Lord was somewhat vexed and gave them an itemized account of their faculties, far from flattering. Their reason is wrong; their hearts are blind; their ears hear not; their eyes see not neither do they re-

member. That was pretty hard on the apostles, but they deserved it all. They might have mistaken Christ's meaning in other ways. Surely they ought not to have thought that they would not have bread enough. Christ had fed five thousand, and twelve baskets of fragments remained; He had fed seven thousand, and seven baskets of fragments remained. Therefore common sense, eyes, ears, heart, memory should tell them that Christ could feed ten or twelve men. "Neither do they remember." But before you berate the apostles for their folly, think of the great food that Jesus offers you on the altar. Are you drawing the right conclusions about the Bread of the altar? You have eyes and ears and a heart and a memory and are your faculties blind and careless? Learn to have confidence in the power of God. One loaf is little, but one loaf and Christ will feed a multitude. Your powers are weak. You alone are nothing, but your slightest

good coupled with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament will be all powerful.

The apostles drew wrong conclusions from the baskets of fragments and how could they have missed the conclusion of confidence and how could they miss the conclusion of Christ's lavish giving? Was it not enough to feed five thousand? Not enough for the excessive generosity of Jesus. His bounty overflows all its measures. The apostles gathered up baskets of fragments. How could they ever forget that great scene, you will wonder. Had you been present and seen loaves doubling, tripling, quadrupling themselves, you are sure you would never forget the sight. Christ gives His blessing, and the loaves multiply. Well, if you were the apostles and saw two, three, four loaves spring up where only one was before, you ought certainly to remember it forever. The apostles seem to have been a dull set before the Holy Ghost transformed them. Yet before you

condemn the apostles utterly and before you grow proud over what you have done, what are you doing and saying about a still greater miracle which goes on before your eyes every day? You witness, not five loaves feeding five thousand, but one body of Christ multiplied daily into a million millions and feeding the whole human race. And did every man and woman on the face of the earth come to the Communion rail every day, the Body of Christ would feed that vast multitude, and every day and for all time there would be fragments over and above. If the apostles had eyes and saw not and had ears and heard not, if their hearts were blind, what of you? Do you reason rightly? Do you remember? Is there any overflow in the measure of your love? Would the keenest eyesight detect the smallest fragment over and above in the generosity of your gratitude, your service? Suppose the apostles come around with the basket

and ask you for a fragment of fervor, more self-denial, more kindness to neighbor and more love to God, will they come back to Christ with their baskets full or empty?

*CUPS*

"A cup of cold water shall not lose its reward." The teaching of Christ follows you into all the details of your daily life. What is easier than to give a cup of cold water? What is grander than to know that your loving Lord has registered that simple act in heaven? The scientists tell you that if a fly moves, the weight of the whole universe has shifted its centre, but our Lord tells you that if you give a cup of water in His name, you move heaven and eternity. The widow's mites become as precious as millions when joined to the might of Christ. Give your gift of money for sinful purposes, and it opens for you the gates of hell; give your money for Christ and it pays your way

into heaven. You cannot make a lie good by any intention whatsoever, but you can make the bankers of heaven lay aside interest for you if you do the simplest act of kindness for the love of Christ. By a cup of water Christ meant any help to His children. An alms, a visit to the sick, a word of encouragement, a smile of approbation, a kindly glance may hold the cooling drink to the thirsty heart, and the thirst of the heart is more piercing than the thirst of the lips. Bring out your cups then and brighten them inside and out if they need it. Be not like the Pharisees who had the dress of religion and the folded hands and uplifted eyes and long prayers of religion, but did not have the heart of religion. They spoke and acted in their own name, not in the Name of God. They were gold-plated, not gold to the core. Put your cups of kindness to thirsty lips and pour in with the water a generous mixture of the love of God. Give all you can with

your cup of kindness, but you will never give what Jesus gives in His cup of kindness. Jesus gives Himself. He filled His cup with His own blood and put that refreshing drink to the thirsty hearts of the world.

Ah, it was not easy for Jesus to pour Himself into the chalice of the Blessed Sacrament. He had to drain the cup of sorrow before He could refresh you with the cup of joy. He shrank from the Passion. God's justice did not hold to the lips of His Son a cup of cold water. Ah! no! The cup of His justice was filled with the bitterness of your ingratitude and the gall of your sins. Christ shrank from the taste of that bitter cup but overcoming His repugnance, He drained every drop of it for your sake. The cup of His sorrow is the cup of your solace. The bitterness of the Agony has filled the chalice of the Blessed Sacrament with the sweetness of peace. You have heard of those doctors who have allowed themselves to

be bitten by insects to prove that fever was so carried from man to man. They died martyrs to science. They took poison that others might avoid poison. Jesus put His innocent lips to the chalice of the world's iniquity that you might be free from your share of it. Jesus gave us the cup of kindness which He sweetened by sacrifice. Drink of the wine of the Blessed Sacrament, the wine from which springeth forth virgins. Learn to be kind. The day on which you make an act of self-denial and sacrifice will be a happy day in your life. The day your sacrifice is done in order to be kind to another will be a blissful day. Be brave to drain the cup of sorrow to give the draught of kindness.

"This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you." Jesus gives to your thirsting hearts not the cup of cold water but the cup of His warm blood. The rich man in hell would give all wealth if Lazarus

would let a drop of water fall from the finger upon the tongue which was parched by the fires of eternal torments. You were doomed to baked lips and parched tongue, and your Saviour came to you across a great chaos fixed by God's justice and with the brimming cup of His own blood slaked your thirst and refreshed and healed you, lifting you by its strength from torments to eternal bliss. You no longer, as was done in the early Church, receive the blood of Jesus under the form of wine. The priest receives under both kinds; you receive body and blood, soul and divinity, all under the form of bread. You drink of the blood of Jesus when you partake of His body living and pulsating with blood. Jesus then is kind to you. He is kind where it costs to be kind. He is kind with infinite kindness. Jesus gives you a cup which He had to die that He might fill. He gives you a cup brimming with the most precious draughts, the blood of the

Lamb of God, the infinitely sacred and rich blood of the Son of God. Give, therefore, give even where it costs, give generously. Give of that treasure in which the poorest are rich, the kindness of deed, of word, of look, of thought.

## PRAYER

*TEACHER of all truth and giver of all good gifts, who hast everywhere and in everything favored us with lessons of duty and benefits of thy bounty, grant, we beseech thee, that ever mindful of what we have learned and ever earnest in what has been enjoined us, we may by thy holy sacrament attain to the fullest measure of eternal truth and eternal goodness.*

## MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT

### *MORNING*

IT was early in the morning that Jesus rose from the dead. That morning was the one which flooded all hearts with the undying light of hope. Sin had been conquered; the imprisoned souls of the just had been led through the open gates of heaven, and now when the great stone was rolled back from the tomb of Christ, death itself had been defeated. Its sting was lost; its victories had gone forever. The morning of Easter brought sunshine to the soul. You and every one who follows Christ has had golden splendor roll in upon the world of your thoughts, and through the brightness of the new day you see the open tombs of earth and the opened gates of heaven. The

morning is naturally the time of hope. Yesterday might have been a failure through sin or sorrow or disappointment, but the morning finds you refreshed in mind and body, clear-eyed to see the mistakes of the past, resolute to repair its damages. A long stretch of unused time lies before you, bright with possibilities of success in the eyes of man and God. If you wish to make that morning hope still brighter and more secure, at least of heavenly success, then put your hearts beside the tomb of Christ and enrich them with new belief in His Resurrection. Should Jerusalem seem far away and the first Easter long distant, there is another tomb and another resurrection which will bring to you the unfailing hope of God. Let Christ roll back the door of His tabernacle and enter upon the risen life He enjoys with His Communicants.

Early in the morning the householder, as Jesus told us in His parable,

went out to hire laborers for his vineyard. He had planned his day's work and was preparing to profit fully by all its hours. The morning is the time of prayer. "I, O Lord, have cried to thee," says David; "and in the morning my prayer shall prevent Thee." Plans and prayers belong to the first part of the day. The work of life must be done intelligently and carefully and so the soul must plan. The work of life should be blessed by God and so the soul must pray. Jesus has been watching over you all the night. He was ready indeed to come to you over the stormy waters if you were toiling fruitlessly at the oar. But now at all events He awaits you. "When the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore." He is ready to bless you as He blessed the work of the apostles. No one could have planned better than they. They knew by years of experience where to go for a rich haul of fish. Yet their work had been in vain; their

plans were fruitless until Jesus stood on the shore in the morning and they let down their nets at His word. Jesus waits for you in the morning. If you do not by Communion take Him away with you through the work of the day, at least let Him bless your plans for the day. Bring to Jesus your bright hopes and above all bring to Him your sad disappointments; submit them all to Him. Accept His guidance, doing all as He bids. Then you know with the assurance that God gives you that your work will be blessed. It may be that the success which men can see will escape you, yet before God and for heaven, your day's plans will be eternally successful because you have brought them to Mass or to the altar where you prayed Jesus to bless your work in the morning.

*NOON*

It was at noon-time that Jesus laid Himself upon His cross and was nailed

to it. Jesus had oftened travelled in the heat of the day over the rough roads. He had been foot-sore and weary. The rocks and brambles had sadly lacerated the feet of the Good Shepherd as He sought for His lost sheep. Should not Jesus have had leisure to rest His tired limbs? How weary the hands of Jesus must have been! He supported Himself by manual labor. He lifted His hands in blessing every day. He went about doing good in the light of the sun and when sunset came, He still continued to lay His healing hands upon the countless sick. Was it not time that the hands of Jesus should have some repose? Time and time again Jesus stood on the sea-shore or along the wayside or upon the hill and spent Himself in His work of teaching the people. His brain was wearied with thinking. His heart was anguished with endless compassioning. Should not thoughts and love have some leisure to get relief?

Alas that Jesus should bear the heat and burden of the day and then on His last earthly day have harder labor! The wearied feet and worn hands were nailed to the wood, the throbbing head was girt with sharp thorns and the loving heart was pierced through. Behold the rest His people have made for their Saviour. You too when you face your day's work, often find that you have a cross to be nailed to. Most of the work of life whether in the home or in office or factory is monotonous. The same round of duties palls on you. The same surroundings, the same companions and the same toil, the same sharp criticism of little defects and the same complete overlooking of perfect work, the same indifference when you arrive at your work and the same gruff dismissal when you leave it, the same fault-finding and petty quarrels at home—all these are your crucifixion. These are the thousand tortures which face you at the noon of your day. You

are fastened down to your work and your surroundings by the sharp nails of duty or necessity. The mid-day sun shines down upon you pitilessly as it beat upon Christ Jesus, your Lord and God.

Yet what is your drop of pain to His ocean of torture? Monotony and coldness and neglect are not sharp things like thorns and nails and spears. Your home, your place of work is not a cross. Most of all, your little crucifixion is not suffered alone. When Christ was lifted up at high noon between heaven and earth, He drew all things to Him. You were drawn to Him and blessed by Him. Your work was made rich; your sufferings became currency payable in heaven because they bore the name of Jesus, the Saviour, written upon them in saving blood. Again, Christ put away from Himself all consolation, His friends, His Mother and, as far as could be, His heavenly Father, but you are never alone. Jesus is with

you in every moment of the day up to noon and after it. If you have received Jesus in Communion or if you have only visited Him or even if you only think of Him in the Eucharist, in all cases He will be with you. His life in the Holy Eucharist is a continuation of the Sacrifice He underwent at noon on the day of His death. Turn then to Jesus in the Eucharist when your hour of crucifixion begins and rest assured that He is still lifted up for you and drawing you to Himself, comforting and consoling, blessing every pang, rewarding every weariness, making your noon-day sufferings as fruitful in their measure as His crucifixion was upon Golgotha under the blazing heat of the Jerusalem sun.

### *NIGHT*

During His public life the time of night was not a time of rest for Jesus. Crowds of sick came to Him at sunset and after the many hours of teaching

and preaching He would go about among the sick, comforting them and healing them, laying His hands upon one, cheering another with words of consolation and to a third giving greater relief than mere cessation of pain by lifting from his soul the load of sin. These were some of the works of Christ after nightfall. Then finally when all had been dismissed and Jesus was alone, even then His labor for us was not at an end. After teaching and laboring and curing, Jesus turned to prayer. "He passed the whole night in the prayer of God," writes St. Luke of one occasion. It is like such a night for Jesus when He puts Himself beneath the appearances of bread and wine. The day of His life is now past, but Jesus does not cease to work. He watches over you as He watched over His apostles. He spends many whole nights in prayer for you. He is, as St. Paul says, "always living to make intercession for us." You may be able

to come in the night after your work and visit Him who is making intercession for you. You may be fortunate enough to be present at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and have the blessing of Jesus come down on you as on the sick of the Holy Land. At all events you will turn towards the sleepless watcher of the Tabernacle when your nightfall comes and think of Him and talk to Him before you go to sleep, grateful to Jesus for watching over you, eager to have further blessings for yourself.

No one who thinks of the Blessed Sacrament can forget that it was night when Jesus sat down to the Last Supper, the night of the institution of the Holy Sacrament. Jesus was to die on the next day and then what would the sick and sorrowing do? They must not be abandoned. Jesus looked down the ages and across the lands and seas and saw every member of man's body tormented with pain and beheld every

heart of mankind throbbing with the anguish of some sorrow. Jesus had your pains and your griefs before His eyes, and He would not leave mankind or you without a comforter. He would still heal the sick and console the sad even after the sun set upon His life. Think of it! On the next day, yes, that very night, within a few hours He was to be betrayed, insulted, tortured, hounded to death; He was to have almost the whole world turn against Him in hate. Yet Jesus was planning to give His enemies life, when they were planning to give Him death. He was devising the most perfect gift which love ever made as they were stirring up hatred and fury to do a most hateful work. What would your thoughts be if you knew some one was to sneer at you, or neglect you or fail to show you respect to-morrow? Would you be planning with Jesus to do your brother good or would you be planning with Judas to do your brother harm?

Would it be the Bread of Life or the poison of death? Would it be the Eucharist or the Cross that you would bring to those who hate you?

## PRAYER

*BE with us, Lord Jesus, morning, noon, and night; fill us with hope at daybreak and patience all the day and contentment after our labors, so that, by the favors which come from thy death and resurrection and by the power of the tabernacle where thou art entombed until our hearts welcome thy coming, we may be strengthened to spend every hour of time profitably and be made worthy to rise gloriously to thee when life is no more.*

## EARS, EYES AND TONGUE

### *EARS*

"HE who has ears to hear, let him hear." It sounds quaint to have the gospel repeat that phrase so often. "Ears to hear." Well, what should anyone have ears for? For ornaments? For hooks on which to hang spectacles? For pendants of ear-rings? Surely though ears may have many excellent offices to perform, they are negligent of their duty if they are closed when they should be open or open when they should be closed. Many a good pair of ears during our Lord's time were not hearing; or if they heard, they did not heed. "The heart of this people is grown gross and with their ears they have been dull to hearing." So speaks St. Matthew of those whom Jesus was

addressing. You know how the ears can get used to sounds. The ears which at one time quiver most lively at the tick of a watch, may by custom become almost entirely oblivious to the pounding of a hundred hammers on hollow iron. Such is the effect of habit. The words of Jesus fell on deaf ears, deaf through habitual indifference, deaf through hate, deaf through pride. Jesus opened many ears in His day, but they were closed by natural weakness or physical defect. Jesus could not always open ears which were closed by gross hearts, closed through lack of love and charity. Jesus could put back soundly and solidly on the head of Malchus the ear which Peter lopped off, but we are not certain that Jesus made Malchus open the ears of his heart.

Let us hope Malchus did use his ears for hearing and heeding Jesus. If he did, Jesus performed in his case a double miracle, restoring ears to Malchus'

heart when He restored ears to Malchus' head. Have you ever had ears deafened to you by hatred? Have you ever had anyone refuse to hear a good word of you, and eager, even greedy, to listen to any evil story about you? Have you ever felt or knew or imagined that one who was dear to you, a father, a mother, a relative, a friend, has turned towards you not deaf ears, although that were bad enough, but a deaf heart? Have your excuses, protests, appeals, cries of agony, fallen on stony deafness? Ah, if you have experienced the bitterness of having deaf hearts turn deaf ears to you, will you permit your hatred or pride to change for others your hearts to lead and your ears to stone?

Recall the sensitive ears of Jesus. When ears have been trained by long practice to appreciate the beauty of music, the slightest discord may produce pain as acute as quivering flesh would feel under the edge of a knife.

Think of the ears of Jesus and how they throbbed with agony at the sins of mankind. The only reason why Jesus took a body was to suffer for you. His ears then heard every sound of hatred and anger from the venomous whisper which pride utters so secretly, even to the loudest clamor of savage rage. His ears were open to every sound of pain and sorrow. The faint murmur of the lost sheep, and the penitent outcry of the Prodigal, the low moan of the widowed mother and the loud lament of the saddened father, the anguish of every foul disease and the agony of death, all human griefs in their fullest intensity or slightest manifestation, found Jesus with ears to hear and a heart to throb. Jesus never closed His ears in hatred. You could insult Him, and He would be all the more gentle with you. You could strike Him, and He would not repulse you. You could murder Him, but even in death His ears would still be open to

you. Jesus has not taken His ears away from you. They are still open to you in His altar home. They still come close to you in Communion. Jesus has still ears open to hear you, whether you are repenting of old faults or resolving on new virtues, whether you weep or rejoice. Jesus has ears which love has opened and which love shall ever keep open.

*EYES*

St. Ignatius of Loyola has a method of prayer which consists in comparing the use we make of our senses with the use our Lord made of His senses. The senses need education, and they could not go to a better school than to that of Jesus. The eyes that have been made to look as Jesus looked will see God for all eternity. Christ has told you that if your eye is an occasion of sin to you, pluck it out. That is the heroic treatment for extreme cases. Prevention is the first duty; cure, the

second; amputation is the last resort. He who has watched the glances of Jesus in the gospel and looked eye to eye with Him upon life, will go into heaven with all the eyes God gave him. Jesus had searching eyes. Nothing escaped their glance. Jesus saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven and beheld the gleam of the widow's two mites as they dropped into the temple treasury. To the eyes of Jesus the widow's farthing was brighter and bigger than the large amount of money of the rich and far more resplendent than the eclipsed glory of Satan. Jesus had far-seeing, penetrating eyes. He looked back to eternity and looked forward to eternity, beholding the doom of Jerusalem, the enduring truth of His Church, the end of time, the day of judgment and the unending joy of heaven. Jesus looked down into the hearts of men, detecting the evil motives of His enemies and dwelling upon the slightest traces of faith or humility or love in all. The

eyes of Jesus were often fixed upon heaven for guidance and blessing. After His baptism He saw the heavens open. Before the multiplication of the bread and before prayer He fixed His eyes upon heaven, as in imitation of Him the priest does now at Mass before the Consecration. You know, then, that Jesus used His eyes to approve good and condemn evil, to keep the heart pure and to receive the help and light of heaven.

The early Christians felt that Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament should bless and sanctify their senses. In some places it was a custom to touch the eyes with the sacred species and to wet them with the moisture of the consecrated wine left upon the lips. They "anointed and blessed," as they said, "the gates of their senses with the body and blood of Christ." No such custom exists to-day but the necessity of sanctifying the eyes still remains and the sight and touch and reception of Jesus

in the Eucharist will help His diligent scholars to look as He looked and make their eyes torches to lead them on the way to God.

However keen the sight of Jesus was, He seemed at times to desire to close His eyes. It is of His eyes closed that you think, no doubt, when you look upon the Blessed Sacrament. There Jesus has veiled His eyes from our gaze and there too you may learn the lesson of keeping eyes closed, a more useful lesson and a harder one to master than that of keeping eyes open. Jesus looked upon the sinful woman and saw her sorrow, closing His eyes to her past sins. Jesus looked upon Magdalen, and her love made Him shut out the vision of her lapses. Jesus looked upon Peter with regret, not with recrimination, and Peter was converted by that one loving look. Is that the kind of look you have experienced in your life? Have people ever gazed at you with looks of hatred and stones in

their hands? Have they gazed, as the Pharisee did upon Magdalen, sneering, criticising and condemning? Have they looked at you as the maid servant looked at Peter, to ruin you? What has been the glance of other eyes upon you? Was it veiled by charity or venomous through malice? Have you had fixed upon you the eyes of Jesus or the eyes of Judas? But the question now is, what you are going to do, rather than what has been done to you. The veiled eyes of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will teach you the difficult art which Jesus practised. You will close your eyes to sin and not let them direct the casting of any stones. You will close your eyes to criticism and rash judgments and not let them condemn what Jesus does not condemn. You will close your eyes to the denial and betrayal of Jesus and open them to conversion and hope and love.

## *TONGUE*

If eye and ear have slain their thousands, the tongue has slain its tens of thousands. Who shall count the victims of the tongue? The sneering tongue, the chilling tongue, the venomous tongue, the fault-finding tongue, the back-biting tongue, the nagging, carping and cutting tongue, the lying and malicious tongue—that is a list which has murdered more souls than the most fatal plague has destroyed bodies. The tongue will lie in ambush like a poisonous serpent; it will leap from the dark like an assassin's dagger; it will sting like a deadly scorpion; tear its prey like a ravenous lion and gnaw upon the bones like a famishing cur. Say what you will, you cannot equal what God's revealed word tells you of the tongue. "Every nature of beasts and of birds and of serpents and of the rest is tamed and hath been tamed by the nature of man. But the tongue,"

cries St. James, "no man can tame, an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison," "a world of iniquity," "set on fire by hell." These are the words of Christ's apostle, and they are not exaggerated. Think of the mangled victims of the tongue which you yourselves know of. Citizen set against citizen; neighbor against neighbor; friend estranged from friend; families rent asunder; husband and wife blackening each other with the horrors of the divorce court; sister hating sister; brother with murderous thoughts against his brother; these and tens of thousands of ruined souls like these, are on the death list of the tongue. No wonder the tongue of Dives was blistered by the fire of hell. Touch it not, Lazarus, with the tip of your moistened finger. The tongue as St. James said was set on fire by hell. There let the virulent pest burn forever without one drop of alleviation.

But suppose Lazarus had been permitted to let one drop of refreshing

water touch the lips of Dives; suppose a flake of the whitest, ice-cold snow had fallen upon that tortured, burning tongue, what would Dives' gratitude not be! Would he not beg Lazarus to tell his friends on earth to govern their unruly tongues and avail themselves of all the means which would make them worlds of sanctity rather than of iniquity. If a flake of snow will quench a spark of fire, what should be the effect upon the tongues where rests day after day the snow-white host of the altar? There is "a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb." Cooled by that pure snow, bathed in that crystal stream, the tongues which are on fire against you will quench their flames here, not intensify them with Dives hereafter.

What is most deadly about the tongue is that we see its evil to us; we do not see the evil our tongues do to others. The hand which grasps the

dagger's handle feels not the keenness of its point. You wince and flame to anger at what others say about you, but do not think that what you said yesterday or the day before that is now making your neighbor flame to anger? You see other homes blasted by evil tongues. Are you dropping sparks of fire which will produce in your homes a like disastrous explosion? If you thought one was now striving to ruin your character by speaking of your faults, you would cease to number such a one among your friends. That you are not the first to set the evil going, is indeed to your credit, but why should you be the one to keep it going. The authorities keep fever and death away from Panama by killing the carriers of the plague. Have others by carrying evil on their tongues infected souls against you? Are you anxious to rival those noxious insects which go from man to man and inoculate them with the seeds of destruction? The tongue

which Jesus touches should not be a plague-carrier. Jesus once with the saliva of His own mouth touched the tongue of a dumb man, and the dumb spoke. Can you imagine him using that newly restored tongue to slander or criticise or injure Jesus? Will the touch of the body of Christ be less powerful in its effects upon your tongue? The venomous point of the tongue can pierce another only by piercing Jesus first. If you will sin against a neighbor, you must first sin against God. Will you carry Jesus upon your tongue that you may before the day is done wound and slay the friends of Jesus?

PRAYER

*JESUS, Friend and Redeemer of mankind, whose command bids us love one another with our whole heart, whose generous invitation gathers us all, as of one home, to thy banquet of divine hospitality, bless us richly in every*

*member of our body with thy gentle charity that we may constantly in what touches our neighbor hear and see and say all good and no evil, and may by mutual kindliness make of this earth a vision of heaven.*

## TEARS, ATONEMENT AND LOVE

### *TEARS*

JESUS wept at the tomb of Lazarus whom He loved. Martha and Mary needed no such testimony to prove Jesus' love. Had they not sent to Him the tenderest message ever conceived by mortal minds? "He whom Thou lovest is sick." That was not the composition of the busy Martha. She was off arranging about the messenger. It was rather the composition of Mary. It came from the school that held its sessions at Christ's feet and was the ripest product of the best scholar. Martha and Mary, then, needed not the testimony of tears to prove a love they knew too well. But there were incredulous visitors in the mourning house at Bethany, and they needed evidence,

evidence not merely of the love of Jesus, but also of its intensity. Indeed it was the intensity that they expressed when they said, "Behold how He loved him."

Does it not seem strange that Jesus should have wept? In a moment He was to order the stones taken away; He was to summon Lazarus forth; He was to loose him and let Him go. One would think He should smile. Once before, when the daughter of Jairus was dead, He said, "Why make you this ado and weep?" It is a new revelation, if we needed one, of the delicate sympathy of the Heart of Christ. The grief of the crowd about the house of Jairus was too demonstrative to be fully sincere. It changed too quickly to a sneering laugh when Christ spoke of the girl as sleeping. But here in Bethany, with Mary fallen at His feet, there was sacred grief and, though it was to change soon into joy, Christ's Heart felt its present poignancy too

keenly to anticipate the gladness of its removal. Love reached in with power to the deep sluggish source of a man's tears, and Jesus wept.

That was surely a moving sight. The most incredulous could not doubt what it meant. It had one lesson, one meaning, and even unbelieving minds spontaneously made confession of the truth. The tears of Christ were pledges of the love of Christ. "Behold He loved him." The tears of Christ were eloquent pledges of a deep and intense love. "Behold how He loved him."

They were pledges, too, of a true love. It was not a wave of sentiment that surged through Christ's Heart and was crested by the brief foam of a few tears. Some of the Jews seem to have thought that the tears were the easy flow of sentiment and not the evidence of true affection. They objected, "Could not He who opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that

this man should not die? Why this useless outpour of unavailing tears? If this man were a real friend of Lazarus, He would not have allowed him to die as He seemed to have power to keep him in life." How easy it would have been for these carpers to reason rightly! If they had said, "The One who restored sight to the blind will, in a love proved sincere by His tears, restore life to the dead," they would have shown more logic and more charity. However, in the schools of uncharitable criticism, no one abides by the rules of logic.

Christ's love was one of sincerity and not of mere sentiment. If Christ's tears were the revelation and measure of a depth of love undreamt of, what were "the people who stand about," as Christ called them, to say of His deeds? Hypocrisy may possibly squeeze tears from a man's eyes, but hypocrisy will not roll away a tombstone, will not summon forth the dead, will not strip off

the winding bands and give to the captive of death the freedom of life. Christ did all that. "Behold how He loved him." The testimony of deeds surpasses the testimony of tears. The evangelist does not tell us what the Jews said at the resurrection of Lazarus; he simply records: "Many therefore, of the Jews who had come to Mary and Martha and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in Him." Yet, even after it all, after the tears, after the raising of Lazarus, after the undoubted love of Christ shown in every way love can be shown, "some of them," continues St. John, "went to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus had done." In vain were Christ's tears for "some of them," in vain was this tremendous miracle, in vain the lavished love of Jesus. Many believed, but some went to the Pharisees. Too bad that Christ's tears should have left even one heart untouched!

*ATONEMENT*

Jesus wept at a larger tomb, and He wept other tears. To Him had come a sadder message than was sent out by the sisters of Bethany. It was not one alone who was sick or dead, but the message was now, "The world Thou lovest is dead." Christ answered the message in person. He came to stand before the tomb wherein mankind lay wrapped in the winding bands of sin. Through life Christ had drawn nearer and nearer to the sealed door of that tomb, but it was in Gethsemane that He finally stood, close up to the great stone of God's justice that was laid over the sepulchre of the souls of men. He would on the morrow roll it away. He would from the Cross cry out to mankind, "Souls of men come forth." He would say to God's justice, "Loose them and let them go." But now He was pausing. His flesh was playing the part of Martha. It was urging the

cost of opening the tomb. In it was not one corrupting corpse, but the moral offensiveness of mankind. No physical delicacy of sense, cultivated by the exquisite care of years of refinement, can in any measure equal or even picture to us the extreme sensitiveness of Christ's virgin soul to the slightest scent or touch of sin. In some way or other, let the theologians explain how, Christ felt the horror of the accumulated foulness of the sins of all men, the unsightliness of the souls that were buried before Him. No language can equal that of Isaias, who classed the Redeemer with the lepers and the accursed of God. "Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows; and we have thought Him, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted."

What must have been the trouble in Christ's spirit as he faced in Gethsemane the tomb of His dead brethren, the sinful souls of men? Sorrow for

one departed friend, whose body was rotting away, struck at the fountain-head of Christ's tears, and they burst forth, testifying to His love. "Behold how He loved him." What will sorrow for many friends do with Christ? It will strike in further, it will reach greater depths of feeling and draw forth a stronger testimony of love. Prostrate before the sepulchre of the world, Christ freely and with full knowledge of what it would mean for Him, made the great act of contrition for mankind's sinfulness and allowed the whole offensiveness of every soul's moral death and corruption to strike into His very Heart. Lo, the result! The brimming contents of that Heart fled shrinking from the inner grief and vision out through every avenue, under the pressure of that horror, under the crushing force of the wine-press of justice, out to the red vintage, out to the tears of blood. "Behold how He loved us."

*LOVE*

We are before a tomb, not a tomb of death or sin, but of love, and what are our hearts doing here? Are they giving any testimony of love? Is there any trace of moisture around the dried up fountains of our tears? Is there any stirring of the depths of our hearts? The message has come to us, "He whom thou lovest, is buried," buried in the tomb of the Tabernacle, behind the door and veil of the sanctuary in the dark home of His love and choice. We know that message, and we have drawn near to the door of the tomb.

Behind it there is no death, but life and the author of eternal life. Behind it there is no sin, but purity and the source of all purity. Before it should be the love and spirit of sacrifice which Christ had before the tomb of Lazarus and before the tomb of sin, the love and sacrifice which showed itself convincingly to sceptics in the powerful

arguments of tears and blood. We may not be able or may not be called to testify to our affection and spirit of sacrifice in this way, but we are all expected to have before the tabernacle some beginnings of such true feelings, although they may be hidden away from the sight of men. We may not have the outward evidence; we should have the inward reality. If not tears in our eyes, if not beads of blood on our faces, at least the warm wish and the generous resolution.

Christ's love was not confined to tears or even to the sweat of blood; it went on to the stronger test of love—to deeds. Christ said to the Jews, "Take away the stone," and to Lazarus, "Lazarus, come forth." Christ said to God's justice, "Take away from mankind the weight of your justice," and to mankind, "Mankind, come forth from the eternal tomb of sin." In the first case many believed, but some went to the Pharisees to inform on Jesus

and make His charity and miracles the motives for His destruction. In the latter case, although Christ, with a strong cry and with tears in the days of his flesh, has called the dead from the grave, although His blood, speaking louder than that of Abel, has summoned mankind from the sepulchre of sin, many have not come forth. For them the tears have been all in vain, the blood of Gethsemane and the Cross of Calvary have been unavailing. What will that sad fact mean for us before the tabernacle? It should mean that we shall be more prompt to the call of Christ for the very reason that others refuse to leave the opened tomb. We shall love more the fullness of life and light because others cling to the foulness and darkness of death. "Souls of men, come forth."

There is still another lesson before the tabernacle. Christ has put Himself, as it were, in the bonds of death. He has buried His body and soul be-

neath the winding bands of bread. He has gone into a tomb of love upon the altar. But He awaits, too, His resurrection. He awaits from our lips and our hearts the cry that went out from Him for Lazarus, "Loose him and let him go." "Loose me," Christ says, "and let me go. Loose me from the tomb and the winding bands of my love and let me go to the hearts of men and to your hearts. I came that you may have life, but I cannot impart life if I have not freedom, if I come not forth, from my death on the altar to my resurrection in the souls of men. Loose me and let me go." Behold how we shall best love Him.

PRAYER

*JESUS, most loving Redeemer, whose eyes have often been wet with tears for the sorrows of men, whose body was drenched with blood for the sins of men, fill our hearts with sincere repentance*

*that by the saving power of thy precious body and blood, we may leave forever the dark grave of evil and through thy coming in Communion, we may attain to the glory of resurrection in time and in eternity.*

## YOUTH, MATURITY AND AGE

### *YOUTH*

THE children of the gospel! Who does not like them and recall their memory gladly? You see them playing in the market place; you hear them singing in the temple in praise of Christ; you remember them crowding in loving confidence around Jesus, receiving His tender caresses and being sanctified by His holy touch and blessing. How ardent the invitation of Jesus that the children should come to Him! How highly He esteemed their humility and simplicity! The children were to be the model to correct the proud and the self-seekers. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, as a little child, shall not enter into it." How solicitous Jesus is for the children! "Take heed

that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven." How fiercely Jesus threatens the man who would scandalize the little ones! "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." The trustful innocence of the young and the pure will ever be preserved from the slightest stain of pollution, if their angels represent them before the Majesty of God in the highest heavens and away down in the depths of the sea their scandalizers are sunk under the weight of a millstone.

The loveliness of the gospel children is all the more beautiful when seen against the sad back-ground of the Christ Child. No doubt when Jesus gathered the little ones around Him, He recalled His own young days. Their play reminded Him of Bethlehem's want and suffering; in their

songs He heard the cries of the murdered Innocents; their angels were companions of the angels which sent Him into exile and called Him back again; their humble docility which He loved and held up for admiration was a happy counterpart of the sad price He paid for a like but infinitely higher docility. Jesus was obedient to the poverty of Bethlehem with which He began His childhood and obedient to the loss of mother and foster-father, the most keen sorrow with which He closed His childhood days.

Is it not the memory of your own young days that helps to make the children of the gospel attractive? You once played with light hearts and sang with happy voices, darkened by no shadows of the past, shrinking from no future gloom. You then saw no evil in others, expected no evil to come to you nor dreamt of doing evil to anyone. Your wounds healed quickly. Your tears showed you were not hard,

and their speedy drying showed you were not resentful. You trusted all because you had no experience of deception. You were humble because you had no leisure to contemplate your fancied perfections. Your obedience came easy where no prejudices blinded you and no self-will made you rebellious. Surely you have not the sad recollections which came to Jesus when He looked back on His early days or if you have anything like His poverty, His martyred companions, His remote exile, His suffering parents, you have felt it all less because Jesus felt it all for you before and blessed it for you.

When you go back to childhood in memory you cannot forget how near you were to the Blessed Sacrament. You went not to the altar as early as the children are now blessed in being allowed to go; you were not as frequently there as young and old now happily are, but you were docile and received Jesus whenever you were told;

you were innocent and so shrank not from the touch and blessing of Jesus in Communion; you were trustful and when the necessity of the Blessed Sacrament was explained to you, you did not propose insincere objections or permit passions which you had not, to suggest specious excuses. The day of your First Communion was the chief event of your early life. You looked forward to that day with childish anxiety but with childlike joy and eagerness. You renewed that day again and again by many and many a Communion. Is all the joy of youth gone for you? Is not the innocence of repentance at least open to you and the humility of acknowledged sin and the obedience that has been taught by repeated failures? Has not experience taught you the need of the Blessed Sacrament? You, who in your happier and more confiding youth went with trustful love to Jesus because you were told that Jesus was calling you.

*MATURITY*

The gospels give us the history of mature manhood. The early years of Jesus are told of in four chapters and no more, two in St. Matthew, two in St. Luke. Our knowledge of the child Jesus is all too scanty. It was not God's will to tell us more of the first days of Jesus although we should have been glad to have further information. The New Testament was to be the life of the perfect man. Three years is a short space in our life and thirty years is just the dawn of full manhood. The gospels tell us the crowded story of but three years in the life of Jesus and in those three years picture for us a model according to which our lives are to be regulated. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and in His brief stay upon earth left us true and solid principles which will guide us along the paths of far more varied lives. You are familiar with the

main outlines of the life of Jesus. For thirty years He remained hidden from the eyes of men. Then came the time for His public life. He began it with the baptism of John and with fasting and prayer in the desert. He gathered about Him one after another a few followers who were to be the fishers of men. These He kept near Him and trained and sent forth to cast their nets. Then along the roads and across the lakes and up the hill-sides and through the towns and in the cities Jesus taught truths such as no man ever taught before and in the way no man ever taught before and He did wonderful deeds such as no man before or since has done. His power grew and then came enemies, first in the old religion, which He had come to perfect and then He made enemies in the state officials. They did not understand that a new kingdom not of this world, not of the sword, was beginning. The time was short. Events moved rapidly to a crisis. The

religious leaders and civil leaders united their forces. Jesus had won over the people but their allegiance was weak. The work of three years was apparently undone in as many days. Jesus was captured, unjustly condemned and crucified. His enemies had triumphed but their triumph was of short duration. Jesus rose from the dead strengthened His followers by the gift of the Holy Spirit and sent them forth to win the world to Him.

Your lives are to be built upon the life of Jesus and you will have Jesus living in the tabernacle to help you in every stage of the process. You have your years of childhood and preparation for work. During that time you will be hidden with Jesus, hidden and growing by His help in wisdom, age and grace. When God's call comes to you, it will be before the Blessed Sacrament that you will receive it or pray over it. Jesus will bless the work which God gives you to do. Jesus will strengthen

you to perform it. You will go forth to your life's work, whatever it may be, and will begin humbly and will gradually do better. You will see from your model that you are expected to labor incessantly, to improve yourselves in every way. Difficulties will come and you will meet them bravely. At such times you will retire to prayer as Jesus did and you will be found kneeling before the altar. The more important undertakings of your lives will call for greater deliberation and longer prayer. Taking up a profession, engaging in a new business undertaking, adopting a higher vocation or entering upon another state of life, you will come closer to the Blessed Sacrament, making a retreat and being more fervent and frequent at Communion. Thus you will resemble Jesus who spent whole nights in prayer as on the occasion when He was to choose His apostles. You may be destined to meet with failure; you surely must some day face death. In

either case like Jesus you will go from the Last Supper to the last Agony, from the Eucharist to Calvary. So your lives will advance from perfection to perfection fulfilling in each stage, as Jesus did, the holy will of God, and finding in each part of it your necessary strength and your cheering comfort in the Blessed Sacrament. The maturity of your lives will be reproductions of the life of Jesus and the best fruit of His sacred body and blood.

### *AGE*

Are you already old or are you now in the prime of life but looking forward to the coming of age? It well may be that unlike the foolish man in the gospels, without presumption or trust in self but humbly and with trust in God, you await the years of age. Pray that you may grow old without great pain and without great helplessness. It is a trial, almost a torture, for some to see that after years of activity and of vigorous,

exuberant health, they have become a care to others. Will that humiliation find you patient or fretful? Will you grow old like some floors which wear into sharp, aggressive splinters or rather will you not be gathered to God in an old age like the harvest and sweetened to mellowness like the fruits of autumn? Should, however, it be God's will that you suffer the weakness of old age as the man in the gospel who "had been for eight and thirty years under his infirmity," then we shall all pray that you as he may at the end meet Jesus coming, if not to make you walk again with this life's health, at least to arise to Him with the happiness of eternal life. Neither will you grow old, we pray, in selfishness. The mother of James and John did not indeed look for herself when she begged Jesus to give her sons posts of honor, yet she learned from Jesus a still higher unselfishness and gained that necessary virtue for the old, patient resignation

to the will of God, by Whom all things are regulated. When the mother of the sons of Zebedee stood by the cross of Jesus, she showed she had acquired the highest unselfishness and saw her son given a higher position even than she had asked for him. John was appointed to take the place of Jesus towards Mary, His Mother.

But do not think of the old who came to Jesus in weakness or imperfection; think rather of those who grew old in the temple and before God. Such as Anna who after seven years of married life "was a widow until fourscore and four years, who departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers, serving night and day." Such too in the holiness of age was Simeon. "This man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel and he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord." Both of these holy souls had

grown old in the service of God. They had not the real presence of God perpetually with them in their temple as we have. They rejoiced and felt themselves fully rewarded for many years for God, simply because they had seen Jesus. Simeon was ready to die when he took Jesus in his arms. Anna gave praise to God and spoke of Jesus far and wide. Think of them when you grow old. Think of them on some quiet evening when you find yourself before the tabernacle of Jesus. As the light of day is fading from the Church and you can see nothing, you will feel that it is twilight with you in your old age. The light is going. Friends and relatives one after another have departed. The light of many loving eyes shines no more for you and the smiles of many dear ones beam no more upon you. You are left alone. Your trembling fingers clasp your worn beads and cling to them as though you were abandoned on the wide seas and caught helplessly as at

some floating fragment. Look up in that lonely hour and know if all lights shall fade, one will never grow dim or fail you. If the darkness of the night and many years settles thick about you and hides everything from you, the light of the altar will be there to fill your faded eyes and make your wearied heart leap with joy. Anna and Simeon were happy because they had one glance of the Child Jesus. Simeon took Jesus in his arms for a few moments and then was willing to die. Peace had come to him. So peace comes to you. You have seen Jesus not once only but many, many times. You have not been blessed by one loving touch of His holy person but again and again He has come into your heart. You have grown old in His service and the light of His peace floods your heart. Though all are gone, yet is Jesus not gone, and He will come once more to you in a far more loving way than to Simeon and then you will say after your last Com-

munion: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace."

## PRAYER

*SUFFER us, good Jesus, as little ones, to come unto thee; teach and guide us in all the words and works of our maturer years, and when it is towards evening, stay with us; that fed upon the bread of the children we may increase unto the measure of the age of thy fullness and so after the labors of life may be dismissed in peace, like holy Simeon, to the kingdom of God.*

# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX I

## THE NATURE OF THE HOLY HOUR AND ITS INDULGENCES

There are three practices of the Holy Hour specially authorized and indulgenced by the Church. The first is wholly Eucharistic and is made in public or private for one hour on Holy Thursday, Corpus Christi and any Thursday of the year in commemoration of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. Any pious exercise during the hour (meditation, vocal prayers, etc.) suffices for the indulgences. The indulgences are: 1. Plenary for Holy Thursday with Confession and Communion on the day or during the week following; 2. Plenary for Corpus Christi on the same conditions; 3. Three Hundred Days every Thursday of the year. (BERINGER: *Les*

*Indulgences,* French authorized translation, 1905, Vol. I, 371.) Many associations of the Church practise such a Holy Hour in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. Among them may be mentioned the Archconfraternity of the Most Blessed Sacrament (Beringer II, 128), the Archconfraternity of Perpetual Adoration (*ibid.* 130, 133), The Association of Priest Adorers (*ibid.* 452), the Priests' Eucharistic League. The Archconfraternity of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus (*ibid.* 480) prescribes half an hour weekly. All of these devotions are indulgenced for the members of such societies if the conditions required in each case are complied with.

The second kind of Holy Hour was instituted in accordance with a revelation related by Blessed Margaret Mary. It consists of an hour of prayer in union with the Agony of our Lord in the Garden in order to appease the anger of God and to win graces for sinners.

This hour is made by members of the Archconfraternity of the Holy Hour, an organization founded by Father Debrosse, S. J., at Paray-Le-Monial. It has been approved of and extended by different popes, and in 1911 the Archconfraternity at Paray-Le-Monial was empowered to aggregate confraternities anywhere in the world. In order to gain the indulgences members must have their names inscribed on an official register. In the case of all religious communities, it is sufficient to have the community itself inscribed once for all. To gain the plenary indulgence granted on each occasion, with the usual conditions, the members must pray for any hour from Thursday afternoon to Friday morning in union with Jesus in agony, for the purpose of appeasing God's wrath against sin and in reparation for sinners. This Holy Hour is concerned with the Passion rather than with the Blessed Sacrament. (BERINGER: Vol. II, 144.)

The third Holy Hour is an extension of this second one. First every individual member of the Apostleship of Prayer may gain the plenary indulgence granted to the members of the Confraternity of the Holy Hour without being registered in that Confraternity provided he fulfills the conditions, namely an hour of meditation or vocal prayer on the Passion at the time designated, with Confession and Communion. Secondly, this privilege was further extended in 1875 by Leo XIII, and members of the Apostleship who practise the Hour *in common,* may now make it on any day or hour once in a week. (BERINGER: Vol. II, 202.) In this rescript occur the following words: "It has been reported to us that many of the Associates of the said Apostleship, called together by the directors according to the statutes of the League are wont to assemble on certain hours and days in churches or chapels to perform in honor of the Most

Sacred Heart of Jesus or of the August Sacrament of the Altar, the pious exercises of adoration and reparation belonging to the devotion of the Holy Hour." The words here cited do not restrict the prayers and meditations to the Passion alone but include exercises in honor of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Sacrament. Such would seem to be the general custom now. The Holy Hour which was originally concerned with the Agony in the Garden has grown to comprehend all the Passion, the Sacred Heart and the Holy Eucharist. In practice the faithful should be recommended to entertain thoughts of sympathy with Christ suffering, of hatred for sin, of reparation to Christ for the ingratitude and indifference of mankind.

# APPENDIX II

## ORDER OF EXERCISES FOR THE HOLY HOUR

There is no fixed way of practising the devotion. The following is suggested as suitable. By "Meditation Prayer" is meant the short prayer printed in this book at the end of the third point. After each point several minutes should be spent in thinking over the truths just explained, in silent prayer upon them and in practical applications to the needs of each one. This is called here "Reflection." Several "Vocal Prayers" are given, any or all of which may be recited as time and devotion demand. The choice of the "Hymns" is left to the pious tastes of those in charge. Hymns on the Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Heart and Passion are most in keeping with the devotion. All the prayers except the "Meditation Prayer" are taken from the Raccolta and are indulgenced.

*FIRST QUARTER*

1 *Opening Prayer*

"Jesus, my God, my Saviour, with that lowly homage with which faith inspires me, I worship thee, true God and true man; with my whole heart I love thee, enclosed in the most august sacrament of the altar, in reparation for all the acts of irreverence, profanation, and sacrilege, which, to my shame, I may ever have committed, as well as for those which have ever been committed, or ever may be committed in ages yet to come.

I adore thee, my God, not indeed as much as thou deservest, or as much as I ought, but according to the little strength I have; and fain would I adore thee with all the perfection of every rational creature. Meantime, I purpose, now and forever, to adore thee, not only for those Catholics who adore thee not and love thee not, but also for the conversion of all heretics, schis-

matics, Mahometans, Jews, idolaters, and wicked Christians. Ah! my Jesus, may all men ever know, adore, love and praise thee, every moment, in the most holy and most divine sacrament! Amen.

I adore thee at every moment, O living bread of heaven, great sacrament!

Jesus, Son of Mary, I pray you, bless my soul.

Holiest Jesus, my Saviour, I give thee my heart." *200 days.*

2 *First Point*

3 *Meditation Prayer*

4 *Reflection*

5 *Vocal Prayers*

"Divine Jesus, incarnate Son of God, who for our salvation didst vouchsafe to be born in a stable, to pass thy life in poverty, trials and misery, and to die amid the sufferings of the cross, I

entreat thee, say to thy divine Father at the hour of my death: Father, forgive him; say to thy beloved mother: Behold thy Son; say to my soul: This day thou shalt be with me in paradise. My God, my God, forsake me not in that hour. I thirst: yes, my God, my soul thirsts after thee, who art the fountain of living waters. My life passes like a shadow; yet a little while, and all will be consummated. Wherefore, O my adorable Saviour! from this moment, for all eternity, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my soul. Amen." *300 days.*

"O most compassionate Jesus! thou alone art our salvation, our life, and our resurrection. We implore thee, therefore, do not forsake us in our needs and afflictions, but, by the agony of thy most sacred Heart, and by the sorrows of thy immaculate mother, aid thy servants whom thou hast redeemed by thy most precious blood." *100 days.*

"Look down, O Lord, from thy sanctuary, and from heaven, thy dwelling place, and behold this holy Victim which our great high-priest, thy holy Child, the Lord Jesus, offers up to thee for the sins of his brethren; and let not thy wrath be kindled because of the multitude of our transgressions. Behold the voice of the blood of Jesus, our brother, calls to thee from the cross. Give ear, O Lord! be appeased, O Lord! hearken, and tarry not, for thine own sake, O my God, because thy name is called upon in behalf of this city and of thy people; but deal with us according to thy great mercy. Amen.

That thou vouchsafe to defend, pacify, keep, preserve, and bless this city.

We beseech thee to hear us." *100 days.*

6 *Hymn to the Blessed Sacrament.*

*SECOND QUARTER*

1 *Opening Prayer*

"Dear Jesus, in the sacrament of the altar, be forever thanked and praised. Love, worthy of all celestial and terrestrial love! who, out of infinite love for me, ungrateful sinner, didst assume our human nature, didst shed thy most precious blood in the cruel scourging, and didst expire on a shameful cross for our eternal welfare! Now, illumined with lively faith, with the outpouring of my whole soul and the fervor of my heart, I humbly beseech thee, through the infinite merits of thy painful sufferings, give me strength and courage to destroy every evil passion which sways my heart, to bless thee in my greatest afflictions, to glorify thee by the exact fulfilment of all my duties, supremely to hate all sin, and thus to become a saint." *100 days.*

2 *Second Point*

3 *Meditation Prayer*

4 *Reflection*

5 *Vocal Prayers*

"Most merciful Jesus, lover of souls! I pray thee, by the agony of thy most sacred Heart, and by the sorrows of thy immaculate mother, wash in thy blood the sinners of the whole world who are now in their agony, and are to die this day. Amen.

Heart of Jesus, once in agony, pity the dying." *100 days.*

"O Lord Jesus Christ, in union with that divine intention with which thou, whilst on earth, didst give praise to God through thy most sacred Heart, and which thou dost still everywhere offer to him in the Holy Eucharist, even to the consummation of the world; I, in imitation of the most sacred heart of the ever immaculate Virgin Mary, do

most cheerfully offer to thee, during this entire day, all my thoughts and intentions, all my affections and desires, my words and all my works." *100 days.*

"Our Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, worthy of all love, who, in the impenetrable designs of thy infinite wisdom, hast borne with the boldness of the impious and the invasion of iniquity, reserving to thyself the sovereign right to judge the impious and his perverse works, mercifully turn thy looks toward thy children who in the blindness of their heart have rebelled against thee. With the eye of a Father and with the power of Supreme King of the universe, stretch forth thy beneficent and regenerating hand toward modern society which rebelliously turns its back upon thee, King of kings, Lord of lords. Stir up thy pity in favor of thy people which thou hast ransomed with thy blood, regenerated

by thy grace, exalted through thy love. Thou didst bestow upon it true liberty, thou hast called it to the heritage of thy Father and to brotherhood with thyself; but in the madness of its rebellion it has preferred the bondage of Satan, and now lives in abject slavery, unhappy in its hopelessness.

Jesus Christ, our Lord, King of eternal glory, restorer of all things in heaven and on earth, almighty ruler, who with infinite wisdom hast brought together at thy feet what was scattered abroad, enlighten the kings of the earth, the rulers of the nations, cause thy spirit to permeate all civil institutions, all governments of every kind, the laws, the armies; grant that all authorities on earth may acknowledge in thee the majesty of the eternal God, the principle from which all authority is derived; enlighten all peoples in order that they may know that thou art the source of all right and all duty, that by thee

all kings of earth command and to thee kings and peoples owe obedience.

O most lovable Jesus, who didst vouchsafe to come down into this vale of tears, and to dwell with us, to suffer and die to save us sinners, and who through an excess of charity hast fixed thy dwelling-place among men, hidden under the sacramental species, and with the fulness of the godhead bodily present in our tabernacles, makest thyself the food and life of our souls, O deign to accept the humble but sincere and deep homage of our hearts as an atonement for the disloyalty of the rebellious. We believe thee firmly, as thou hast been revealed to us through the faith which the Holy Ghost has infused into our hearts, we acknowledge thee as the beginning and the end of all things that exist, we adore thee as the true and only God, we have no will to live but for thee and to serve thee only. But do thou, O Lord, save our

brethren, bring together again the scattered members of human society which in these latter days have gone astray, so that we all, as brothers, may be one with thee, as thou art one with thy Father who is in heaven. May thy will be done by all and in all things; may thy majesty shine forth in splendor on the throne on which thou reignest over human society, and may the world acknowledge thee to be the true Son of God, by whom all things were created.

O Jesus, God of love, break the fetters that bind thy vicar, the successor of Peter, restore him to the possession of that liberty which thou thyself didst give to him together with the keys of supreme jurisdiction, in order that he may carry on efficaciously thy work of regenerating human society, and that the coming of that day may be hastened, the day we long to behold, when thou shalt be glorified by the return of human society to its Father's house; do thou, King of all peoples, gather together the

sheep and the lambs under the care of the one Shepherd. Forsake us not, O Lord; we are thy children, we love thee; acknowledge us still as thy children; unworthy indeed, but yet always thy children; save us, and along with us save all kings, governments and nations. Amen." *300 days once a day; seven years and seven quarantines on Thursday; plenary on Corpus Christi on the usual conditions.*

6 *Hymn for the Passion*

*THIRD QUARTER*

1 *Opening Prayer*

"Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before thy face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech thee to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; the while I contemplate with great love and tender pity thy five wounds, pondering

over them within me, whilst I call to mind what the Prophet David put in Thy mouth concerning Thee, O good Jesus: 'They have pierced my hands and my feet; they have numbered all my bones.'" *Plenary on usual conditions, if recited before a crucifix or its picture.*

2 *Third Point*

3 *Meditation Prayer*

4 *Reflection*

5 *Vocal Prayers*

"Heart of Mary, mother of God, our mother; heart most amiable, delight of the ever-adorable Trinity, and worthy of all the veneration and tenderness of angels and of men; heart most like the Heart of Jesus, whose most perfect image thou art; heart full of goodness, ever compassionate toward our miseries! vouchsafe to thaw our icy hearts, and change them to the likeness of the

Heart of Jesus. Infuse into them the love of thy virtues, inflame them with that blessed fire with which thou dost ever burn. In thee let the holy Church find safe shelter; be thou its guardian and its ever-sweet asylum, its tower of strength, impregnable against the assaults of its enemies. Be thou the road leading to Jesus; be thou the channel whereby we receive all graces needful for our salvation. Be thou our help in need, our comfort in trouble, our strength in temptation, our refuge in persecution, our aid in danger; but especially in the last struggle of our life, at the moment of our death, when all hell shall be unchained against us to snatch away our souls, in that dread moment, that hour so terrible, on which depends our eternity—ah! then, most tender Virgin, do thou make us feel how great is the sweetness of thy mother's heart, how great thy power with the Heart of Jesus, opening to us, in the very fount of mercy itself, a safe refuge,

that so one day we too may join with thee in paradise in praising the Heart of Jesus forever and forever. Amen.

May the divine Heart of Jesus and the immaculate heart of Mary be known, praised, loved, worshipped, and glorified always and in all places. Amen." *60 days.*

## I

Heart of Jesus in the Eucharist, sweet companion of our exile, I adore thee.

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus:
Solitary Heart, humiliated Heart:
Abandoned Heart, forgotten Heart:
Despised Heart, outraged Heart:
Heart unknown by men:
Heart loving our hearts:
Heart desiring to be loved:
Heart impatient, waiting for us:
Heart eager to grant our requests:
Heart desirous of being besought:
Heart source of new graces:

Silent Heart, wishing to speak to our souls:

Heart, sweet refuge of the hidden life:

Heart teaching the secrets of divine union:

Heart of Him who sleeps yet ever watches:

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Jesus, victim! I wish to console thee:

To unite myself to thee:

To immolate myself with thee:

To annihilate myself before thee:

To be forgotten and despised for love of thee—

Not to be loved or understood save only by thee:

I will be silent to listen to thee—

I will leave myself, to lose myself in thee.

Grant that I may thus quench thy thirst, for my salvation and sanctification, and that, purified, I may offer thee a pure and true love.

I will no longer weary thy patience; take me, I give myself to thee.

I offer thee all my actions; my mind, that thou mayest illuminate it; my heart, that thou mayest direct it; my will, that thou mayest render it firm; my misery, that thou mayest succor it; my soul and my body, that thou mayest nourish them.

Eucharistic Heart of my Jesus, whose blood is the life of my soul, I will no longer live, but live thou alone in me. Amen.

## II

Jesus! Adorable Saviour, hidden in the sacrament of thy love, dwelling amongst us to sweeten our exile, shall I not exert myself to console thee? Shall I not offer thee my heart, since thou hast given me thine? It is true, that to give myself to thee is for my own advantage; it is to find the inestimable treasure of a loving, disinterested, faith-

ful Heart, such as I would wish my own to be. Thus I, who can give nothing, am always receiving. Lord, I cannot rival thee in generosity, but I love thee; deign to accept my poor heart, and although it is worth nothing, still it may be made something by thy grace. Since it loves thee, do thou make it good for something and keep it. Eucharistic Heart of Jesus! I consecrate to thee all the faculties of my soul; all the powers of my body. I wish to endeavor to know and love thee ever more and more, to make thee better known and loved by others. I wish to labor only for thy glory; and to do only that which thy Father wills. I consecrate to thee all the moments of my life in a spirit of adoration before thy royal presence; of thanksgiving for this incomparable gift; in reparation for our cruel indifference; and in incessant supplication, that our prayers may be offered to thee, with thee and in thee,

may ascend purified and fruitful to the throne of God's mercy and for his eternal glory. Amen.

## III

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us, inflame our hearts with love for thee.

## IV

Eucharistic Heart of my God, breathing and palpitating beneath the veils of the most sacred species, I adore thee. Moved by a new love in the presence of the immense benefits of the divine Eucharist, penetrated with regret at my own ingratitude, I humbly annihilate myself in the still greater abyss of thy mercies. Thou hast chosen me from my youth; thou hast not disdained my infirmity; descending into my poor heart, thou didst come to invite it to a mutual love, giving happiness and peace. And I lost all because I was unfaithful to thee, O my Jesus. I al-

lowed my mind to become distracted and my heart to become cold; I listened to myself and I forgot thee. Thou didst wish to be my guide, my councillor, the protector of my life, and I, allowing my passions to smother this sweet attraction, lost sight of thee and forgot thee. In the salutary pains of trial, in the joys of consolation, in my difficulties and my necessities, instead of having recourse to thee, I sought creatures and forgot thee. I forgot thee in the beloved tabernacles wherein thy love languishes; in the churches of the city wherein thou art insulted; in sacrilegious and indifferent hearts; and in my own guilty one, O Jesus, even before and after having received thee. Eucharistic Heart of my Saviour, the delight of my first communion and during the days of my fidelity, I surrender myself to thee. Come back, come back, and draw me anew to thyself. Pardon me once more, and I will expiate all by the strength of my love.

Glorious archangel S. Michael, and you beloved S. John, offer my reparation to Jesus and be propitious to me. Amen. 200 *days.*

6 *Hymn to the Sacred Heart*

7 *Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart*

"I, N. N., give and consecrate to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ my person and my life, all my actions, pains and sufferings, resolved on not using any portion of my own self but for his honor, love and glory.

My irrevocable determination is to be entirely his, and to do everything for his love, renouncing with all my heart any act that may displease him.

I do choose you, O most Sacred Heart, for the only object of my love, the protector of my life, the security of my salvation, the safeguard against my frailty and fickleness, the reparation for

my delinquencies in life, and my most secure refuge in the hour of death.

Be yourself, O bountiful Heart, my justification before your Divine Father, and defend me from the dread of his just wrath. O most loving Heart, I place all my trust in you, for I am afraid of my own malice and weakness, but all my hope rests with your mercy.

Destroy, then, in me whatever may displease you or resist you; would that the pure love of you be so deeply imprinted in my heart that I could never forsake you or be separated from you.

I beseech you, by all your mercies towards me, that my name may be written in you; since I crave but one thing, that all my happiness and glory may be to live and to die as your most humble servant. Amen. *300 days.*

*FOURTH QUARTER*

## Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

*or*

## Rosary (Sorrowful Mysteries) with Litany of the Sacred Heart or the Holy Name (*if desired*).

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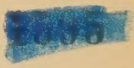

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